

JULY

4

NEW SERIES

# アニメ **AnimeUK**

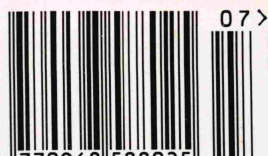
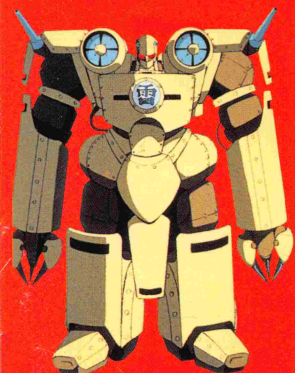
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FIGHTER II

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KAMEN

KISHIN  
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STEVE KYE '95



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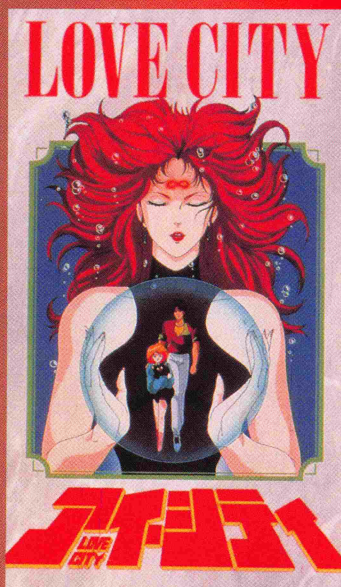
presents

### **Love City** (12 TBC)

Director: Koichi Mashita  
Produced by: Hiroshi Kato

Running time: 100 min.approx.  
©1995 Western Connection  
Price: £13.99

Supernatural beasties, cyborgs and monsters make this beautifully rendered film. Feature length story about rivalries and struggles within a mysterious organisation called the Headmasters.

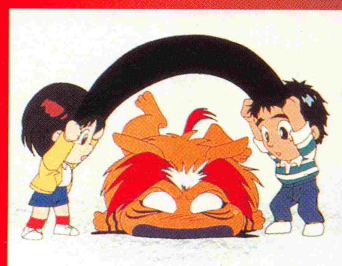


### **Ushio & Tora Vol. 6** (12 TBC)

Director: Kunihiro Yuyama  
Produced by: Isamu Asami

Running time: 30 min. approx.  
©1995 Western Connection  
Price: £8.99

A wild, weird comedy spoof where all the characters are presented in cute, squashed down mode know as SD - Super Deformed - and special visitors feature in three stories...





# アニメ UK

COVER : Chun Li vs Blanka by STEVE KYTE  
STREET FIGHTER II © Capcom, this image © Steve Kyte

## VOL 1 • NO 4

### TEAM AUK

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John Spencer, Designer  
Jonathan Clements, Translator

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### KONNICHIWA!

This issue comes to you a month late. I know from the phone calls and letters we've been getting that many of you eagerly await the arrival of AUK every month, and I'm sorry that you've had to wait longer than usual, but there's a very good reason for it. AUK PRESS has joined forces with Ashdown Publishing, a respected specialist publisher whose expertise and enthusiasm will help us take the magazine even further.

Ever since Peter, Steve and I founded the magazine in 1991, we've constantly tried to improve, to give our readers more information, more pictures, better value for money and a closer connection with every aspect of the anime and manga world. Our relaunch as a newstrade monthly has helped us to reach even more readers in the UK, but we want to provide a better service for readers overseas. And, of course, we want to carry on our tradition of improvement. Ashdown will help us in some very important ways.

For overseas readers and retailers we now offer the convenience of offices in the USA and Japan, as well as the UK. You can call either office to make enquiries about the magazine, place orders or subscribe, with no currency conversion or international call charges to worry about. The phone numbers are on the masthead alongside this editorial. Of course if you already buy from a comic shop or distributor you can carry on just as usual, but for those of who haven't been able to get AUK easily this should solve the problem. In future issues you'll also notice an increase in the page count and a BIG increase in the number of colour pages, with NO increase in the cover price! We're over the moon about this and we think you'll be pleased, too.

We are planning more developments in the coming months, but for the moment the expanded and improved magazine is keeping us pretty busy! Remember, we always welcome your comments and suggestions - you, our readers, are a very important part of Team AUK and we're looking forward to meeting more of you at conventions and events in future. The anime and manga scene is growing and more and more people all over the world are enjoying Japan's unique pop culture. We'll help you stay in touch with all the excitement.

Yours animatedly

Helen McCarthy  
Editor



### OTAKU VOCABULARY

You'll find some Japanese terms crop up again and again. Here are a few definitions:

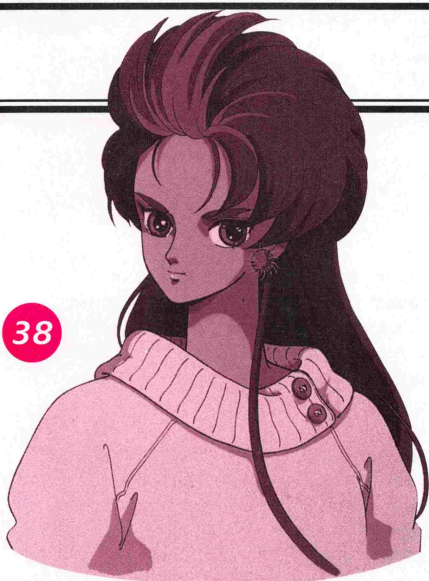
ANIME	Japanese animation
CHARA	character
KAWAII	cute
MANGA	Japanese comics
MECHA	mechanical object, ie robot, vehicle, weapon, etc.
OTAKU	anime fanboy/girl
OVA/OAV	Original Video Animation, anime made for video
SEIYUU	anime voice actor

### CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to our translator Jonathan Clements, who got his Masters' degree from Stirling University and can now be addressed as M. Phil.!



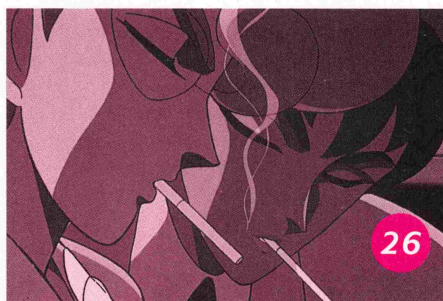
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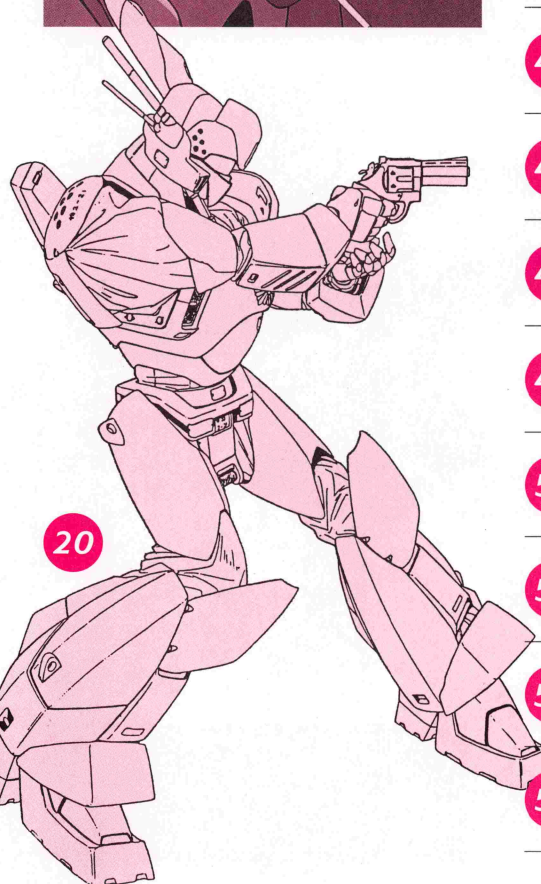
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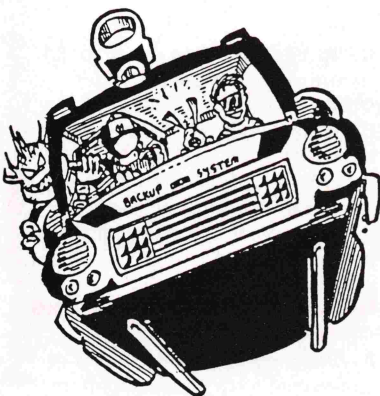
## UK

### UnZIP

CD-ROM technology and lifestyle publishing collide in IPC's first CD-ROM magazine, UnZIP. A price of 'under £20' might sound a bit steep but it promises over 6 hours of entertainment. Look in all major record and video stores for the first issue and get UnZIPped!

### MINAMICON - 23 JULY

Still time to book for this one-day convention in Portsmouth. Guests are Helen McCarthy and Steve Kyte and among other attractions are 12 hours of anime video. Contact Mark Cleaver, MINAMICON, 15 New Road Fair Oak, Portsmouth, Hants, SO50 8EN, UK, enclosing ssae for reply.



### GAUJIN PRESS

have announced the launch of their latest title ARIEL - HIGH SCHOOL DEVIL GIRL, by Josh 'Oni' Clark. New issues of TINSEL CITY and ANIMENIA are also slated, along with several new single-title series, including Keith McDowell's N'FORCERS and A CAT CALLED MANX. For prices and further details write to GAUJIN PRESS, 2 Birkdale Drive, Immingham, Grimsby, South Humberside, DN40 2LB, enclosing ssae/IRCs.

### NO MORE HIROSHIMAS

The Campaign Against Militarism is hosting NO MORE HIROSHIMAS from 2830 July in London. The week-end features major speakers including Frederik L. Schodt, distinguished author of MANGA! MANGA! and co-translator of the manga BAREFOOT GEN among many other titles, an exhibition and a retrospective of anime films. It's followed by HIROSHIMA : THE WEEK, an event aimed at setting a new agenda for international relations in future, with 18 courses and over 70 workshops on a wide range of topics. Groups of 10 or more can get assistance with accommodation and travel arrangements. To find out more, contact AMANDA MACINTOSH on (+44) 171

278 9908, or write to her at HIROSHIMA : THE WEEK, c/o NO MORE HIROSHIMAS, BM NMH, London WC1N 3XX, fax (+44) 171 278 9844, e-mail hiro@camintl.org.

### NETJIN

Jonathan Weeks is discontinuing the paper version of his fanzine ANIMEJIN, one of the best-informed in the UK. However he's experimented with an electronic version so successfully that he plans to continue ANIMEJIN in this form. The time and money needed to put together a paper version and the number of people it can reach via comic shops and conventions were major factors; on the 'net he can put the magazine together faster, cheaper and reach more people. The permanent electronic address for ANIMEJIN isn't yet established though the test version can be seen on <http://www.stack.unc.tue.nl/~veritech/fanzines.html>. You can get more details by contacting Jonathan on e-mail [jchan@swallow.demon.co.uk](mailto:jchan@swallow.demon.co.uk), or by writing to him at 65 The High, Streatham High Rd., London SW16. Don't forget the ssae/IRCs please!

### SUMMER MAGIC

PIZZICATO FIVE (profiled in AUK #2) released a new CDsingle last month. QUICKIE EP features 4 tracks and remixes from their MADE IN THE USA album, in a way-cool sleeve reflecting the clean, simple, insanely fun music inside. On Matador. Buy it now.



## EUROPE

### STRAAT-FIGHTER?

A new Dutch anime zine launched on 21st June. KATSURA is a Dutch-language 32-page quarterly and you can get more details from KATSURA, Bissegemsestraat 54, 8501 Kortrijk-Heule, Belgium.

### VIDEO IN FRANCE

A large range of anime is now available on video in France; as well as Manga's French releases this includes a wide and varied selection of titles from other companies. Those heroic guys at KAZE ANIMATION don't just have the coolest sleeve designs but some of the best titles - like RECORD OF LODOSS WAR, MAPS, IRIA and RANMA 1/2. AK VIDEO has DRAGONBALL and DRAGONBALL Z, BORGMAN and SLOW STEP, while TONKAM covers French releases of titles like USHIO & TORA and DEMON HUNTER YOHKO. You can mailorder French (SECAM - check that your vcr will play this mode!) videos, manga and more from LA BOUTIQUE TOON, BP 249, 94102 Saint-Maur, Cedex, France. Write now for ordering details.

### JAMM TODAY

Still in Belgium, JAMM #4 is out now, and #5 is due in July. This excellent English-language, Belgian-born fanzine, a winner in the AUK Fanzine Awards 1994, has a new look, with a full-colour cover, improved layout and more of the brilliantly-researched articles which are its trademark. This issue has a detailed outline of the DRAGONBALL manga story, HERE IS GREENWOOD, CREAM LEMON and more. JAMM! is now available to shops and distributors from Geknipt Papier CV, Penitentenstraat 24, 9000 Ghent, Belgium; readers who want more information can send IRCs (ssae within Belgium) to Emmanuel Van Melkebeke, Parkplein 5, B-9000 Ghent, Belgium, or e-mail [Emmanuel.Van.Melkebeke@rug.ac.be](mailto:Emmanuel.Van.Melkebeke@rug.ac.be).

## USA

### MORE 'MAINSTREAM' ANIME RELEASES

Streamline's distribution deal into the American mass market with major popular entertainment player Orion is going from strength to strength with the April 14 release of LUPIN III : THE MYSTERY OF MAMO and CRIMSON WOLF, a horror thriller based on the graphic novel by Masahiko Takasho and Kenji Okamura, in the mainstream US video market. There were six more releases at under \$20 in May - the

first two parts of DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS and the first four of CRYING FREEMAN. Available through most US video retailers. Also look out for STREAMLINE's merchandise lines, including their spectacular resin kits.

### ANIMEIGO MULTIMEDIA CATALOGUE

It's got clip art, the famous SpineScenes (TM), all the superb liner notes and full-colour excerpts with sound; it runs on Macintosh or Windows computers; it's highly desirable and it's currently available to retailers, press and direct marketers only. But not for long; New Market Sales President Albert Price has announced that the fans' favourite US anime house will be making this attractive and useful CD-ROM available to fans as a premium with certain purchases 'sometime in 1995 - probably for the holiday season'. So watch out for more on how to get this excellent added-value reference library item!

### GODZILLA TO SAVE L.A.?

Not if TriStar get their way he won't, but two LA artist have mooted the building of a 'shrine to Japanese sci-fi movies' in Little Tokyo as part of a neighbourhood redevelopment project. Nancy Uyemura and Qathryn Brehm have a number of ideas including a moving





image of Godzilla doing laser-battle with another monster every week-end night, and are hoping for sponsorship from companies including Big G's creators Toho, reports the LOS ANGELES TIMES. Let's hope this fabulous idea gets the civic support it deserves! Thanks to Fred Patten for the information.

#### ANIME IN THE PRESS

Fred Patten reports on two major articles which have raised anime's profile in the 'quality' press. The April 1995 issue of WIRED published Andrew Leonard's HEADS UP, MICKEY, a look at anime in general and GAINAX and their debut film WINGS OF HONNEAMISE in particular. And the 1/1995 issue of WORLD ART ran WHO KILLED BAMBI? an overview of the adult aspects of anime by New Yorker critic Anthony Hayden-Guest. WORLD ART is distributed by Central Books and most newsagents/bookshops should be able to order it; WIRED is available from quality newsagents.

#### US CONVENTIONS

They're big (at least, they look that way to us Brits), they're fun, there are a lot of them, and if you're visiting the USA this year you should be sure and include one in your schedule. Write with IRCs, phone or e-mail for details.

#### JUNE 30-JULY 2 ANIME

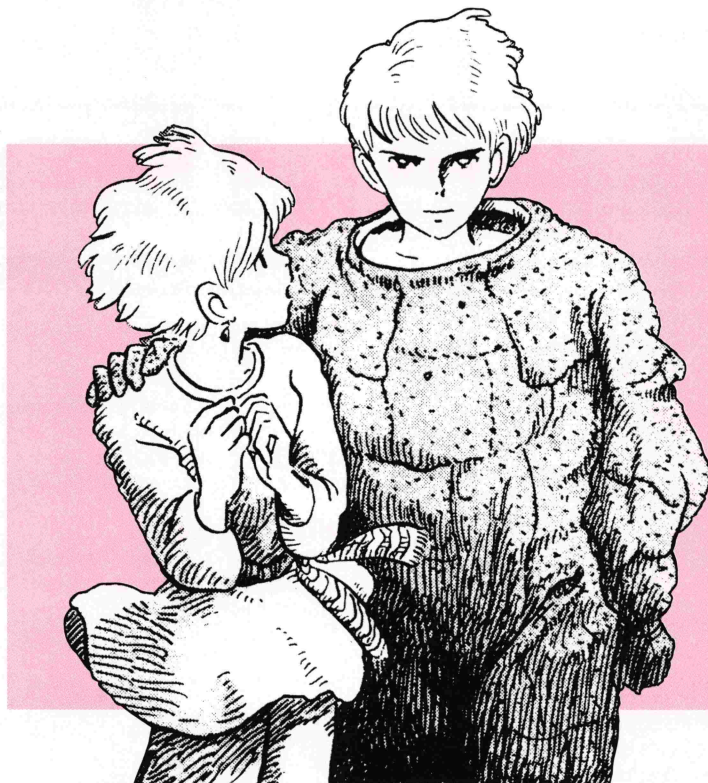
**EXPO**, SPJA, 2425B Channing, Suite 684, Berkeley, CA 947042209, tel 415 929 7077; guests Satoshi Urushihara (PLASTIC LITTLE, KABUTO), masquerade, dealers, premieres & more  
**JULY 7-9 ANIME AMERICA**, F.A.C.E., Megumi Hayashibara (voice actress/singer, the voice of RANMA-CHAN and many more) masquerade, artshow, dealers, etc etc. F.A.C.E., 298 4th Ave., Suite 472, San Francisco, CA94118. Tel. 415 241 8823.

#### JULY 13-16 NORTH AMERICAN SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

, PO Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696, USA; Guests G. A. Effinger, Harlan Ellison, BJo Trimble & more, 24hr anime video, 2 other 24hr video rooms, lots more. \$55 to June 15.

**SEPT 1-4 OTAKON 1995**, 661-A Waupelani Drive, State College, PA 16801, USA. Guests Toren Smith, Adam Warren, Robert DeJesus, 'Kondom'. \$30 to July 9.

**OCT 27-29 ANIME WEEKEND** ATLANTA, PO Box 13544, Atlanta, GA 30324-0544, USA. Guests Vaughan Simmons of MANGAJIN, Bruce Lewis of STUDIO GO!, more tba. awaadmin@peach.america.net. \$17.50, supporting \$5.



#### HOLIDAY READING

Lots of user-friendly graphic novels by your favourites, just right for a few lazy hours in the sun, from those nice people at VIZ COMMUNICATIONS. Top of the list must be Vol 4 of RANMA 1/2, due out July 11, 212 pages of Ranmaction for \$15.95. Combat with a hard edge comes in BATTLE ANGEL ALITA: KILLING ANGEL, the compilation of Part 3 of the manga, or BIO-BOOSTER ARMOR GUYVER: REVENGE OF CHRONOS, 192 pages, at the same price. And at last we get the conclusion of NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF WIND, in eight monthly parts starting in July, 32 pages per issue for \$2.75. UK/European prices and ordering from your local comic shop.

## JAPAN

#### BLOWING OUR OWN TRUMPET

Our Special Correspondent, Masaaki KATO, tells us that when he went into Tower Records' new Shibuya store to buy the first monthly issue of ANIME UK, just two weeks after its launch, they were already sold out! (*The rest of us wanted to be modest and coy about this, but our esteemed Editor INSISTED we run it as a news item ...*) But Japanese fans have to pay big money for AUK - a whopping Y790 plus sales tax. Given the amount European fans pay for Japanese magazines (around £6-12 depending on where you buy) wouldn't it make sense for pen-friends to swap copies of their nations' anime zines? Think about it!

#### EL-HAZARD: THE MAGNIFICENT WORLD

The press release describes this as a 'Hyperstory Anime', an OAV with everything, love, sex, gags, SF, heroism ... we'll soon see, as it hits the video heads in Japan this summer. From the director who gave us TENCHI MUYO! RYO OH KI, this new PIONEER/AIC release takes a new slant on the retro trend, with influences from sf/fantasy romances like UNDERGROUND WORLD PELLUCIDAR and A PRINCESS OF MARS. An everyday group of highschool kids is transported to a parallel world ruled by the beautiful Lune Venus, in order to help defeat the plots of the evil Queen Diva of Bagorum, who dreams of world conquest. Sakura Studio is investigating this new OAV series and will report later: for now, here are a few of the main charas whose stories are told in the seven 'nights', as the OAVs are called, of EL-HAZARD: The Battle of El-Hazard, The Beauty of El-Hazard, The Spring of El-Hazard, The

Demon of El-Hazard, The Thunder of El-Hazard, The Flash of El-Hazard, and The Eternity of El-Hazard.

**MAKOTO MIZUHARA**: our naive hero is transported to another world on meeting a beautiful woman - literally ...

**JINNAI**: Makoto's dorm-mate and rival, a completely self-obsessed narcissist.

**NANAMI**: Makoto's girlfriend is also Jinnai's kid sister.

**FUJISAWA-SENSEI**: Makoto's 31-year-old teacher, this born coward and slob is transformed into a superman in El-Hazard. His saving grace is a real love of the moun-

tains.

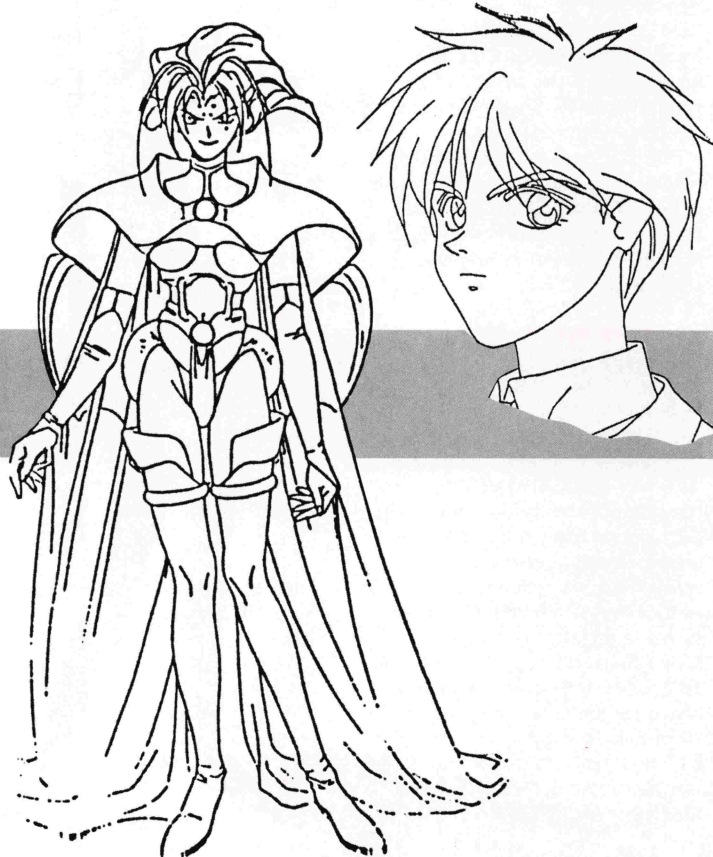
**LUNE VENUS**: 'First queen' of El-Hazard, and a knockout.

**DIVA**: The scheming queen of Bagurum ensnares Jinnai in her web of evil ...

**ARERE**: Industrial-strength Cute who causes Makoto and friends a lot of trouble in the course of their stay in El-Hazard.

#### HUMMINGBIRDS 95 - THE SONG OF THE WIND

As Britain reels under the impact of a maximum force Cute Attack from Western Connection, Japan learns that there are even more HUMMINGBIRDS OAVs in the offing! Yes, the







five singing sisters are still training hard to beat their chief rivals, the Fever Girls, Reiko and Hitomi. However, Reiko and Hitomi have become two of Satsuki's best friends and they used to spend long hours chatting on the phone - often about the Girls' handsome young trainer, Mr. Kato. Then they were beaten by Satsuki in the Autumn Pilot Contest, and went abroad for a while. After a long silence, last night Satsuki got a phone call from the Girls. She wonders when they'll come back - maybe they're in Japan already! After all, the next All-Japan Pilot Contest is coming up fast, and out-of-country achievements don't

count towards nominations. But will the Hummingbirds get a nomination either? With a summer tour for the voice cast and more OAVs due out soon, they'd better!

#### ANOTHER LUPIN TV MOVIE

Missing from our feature in issues 1 & 2 was information on the latest LUPIN III TV movie, LUPIN SANSEI : MOEYO! ZANTETSUKEN, screened in Japan on 24th July last year. The title is translated by Jolyon Yates (who sent us this info) as LUPIN III : BURN [with passion]! ZANTETSUKEN; it 'stars' Goemon Ishikawa XIII's sword Zantetsuken, which can, as its name states, cut steel. The

#### MANGA NOSTALGIA

In November 1994 Satellite Broadcasting Channel 2 asked viewers to vote for their favourite old comics to select the best 100 comics of good old memories'. The top ten titles over the four days of voting were as follows :

1. BLACK JACK by Osamu Tezuka
2. BERUSAIIYA NO BARA (Rose of Versailles) by Ryoko Ikeda
3. PO NO ICHIZOKU (The Po Clan) by Moto Hagio
4. EROIKA YORI AI O KOMETE (From Eroica with Love) by Yasuko Aoi
5. URUSEI YATSURA by Rumiko Takahashi
6. ESU O NERAE! (Be an Ace!) by Sumiko Yamamoto

7. ASHITA NO JOE (Joe of Tomorrow) by Tetsuya Chiba
  8. CANDY CANDY by Yumiko Igarashi
  9. CYBORG 009 by Shotaro Ishinomori
  10. GARASU NO KAMEN (A Glass Mask) by Suzue Miuchi
- AKIRA was in 42nd place and DEVILMAN came 56th. (Many thanks to Machiko Nakamura for this information.)

What are the favourite Japanese comics with AUK readers? Send us your top title on a postcard before July 15th and we'll compile and print a Top Ten list from your votes.

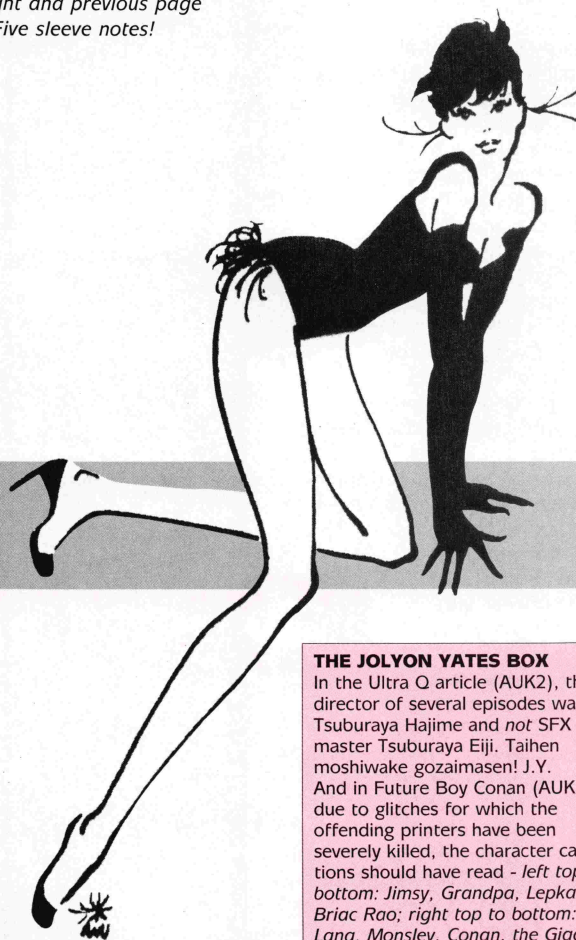
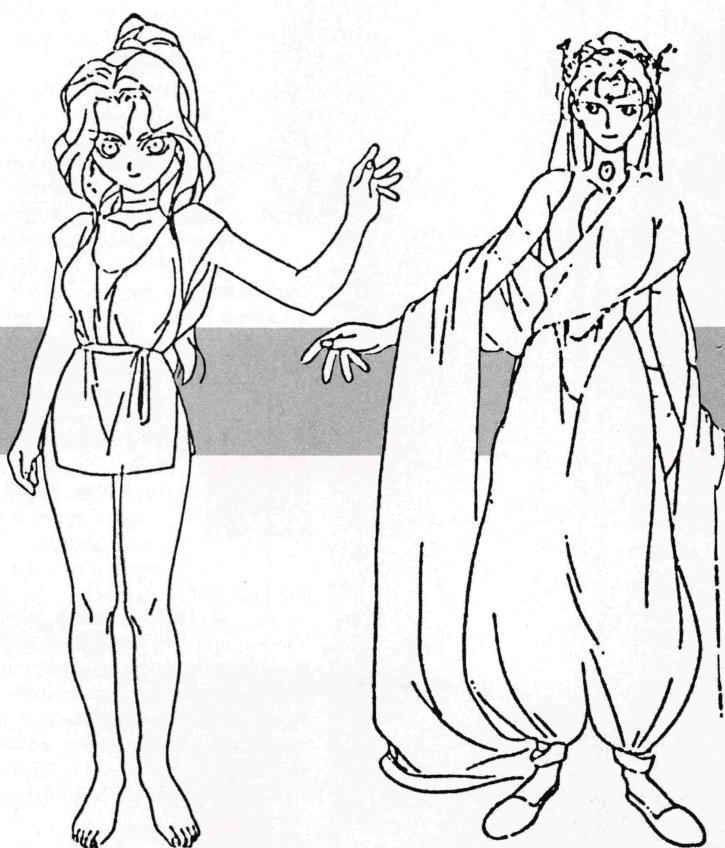
gang salvage an ancient idol from the wreck of the Titanic, but they've been duped; the villains use the idol to create an invincible metal from which they construct a bomber that can't be damaged unless Goemon can strike three times in exactly the same place. Can the combination of his blade's mystical strength and his own matchless swordsmanship save the day?

## ASIA

#### HOBBY BOUNTIES

have a new pricelist. The premier kit exporter in Asia offers fast mail order service and prices in £ sterling. Sadly there's little anime on the new list - some Nitto SF3D and a range of garage kits are swamped by aircraft, dinosaurs and Western TV and cinema kits - but they can't list everything they stock, so if you want something special, write and enquire. Get the list for a couple of IRCs sent to HOBBY BOUNTIES, c/o 865 Mountbatten Road, #02-91/92, Katong Shopping Centre, Singapore 1543, fax (010 65) 344 1782.

Top left: Nausicaa  
Top right: Battle Angel Alita  
Bottom left to right: El Hazard - Diva, Makoto, Arere, Lune Venus  
Bottom right and previous page Pizzicato Five sleeve notes!



#### THE JOLYON YATES BOX

In the Ultra Q article (AUK2), the director of several episodes was Tsuburaya Hajime and not SFX master Tsuburaya Eiji. Taihen moshiwake gozaimasen! J.Y. And in Future Boy Conan (AUK3), due to glitches for which the offending printers have been severely killed, the character captions should have read - left top to bottom: Jimsy, Grandpa, Lepka, Briac Rao; right top to bottom: Lana, Monsley, Conan, the Giganto



It has already been seen how important Macross was to the future shape of Japanese animation: its combination of character, romance, and intricately designed mecha would influence the work of animators for years, creating resonances through the medium that can still be found today. However, without the inspired - and highly controversial - work of Carl Macek and Ahmed Agrama's Harmony Gold, the show might have remained little more than a purely Japanese phenomenon. In reality, Macross had another, equally important role to fill: it was to be instrumental in bringing anime to the attention of an international market.

Carl Macek moved into the anime field via a long and industrious route. Born in Pittsburgh in 1951, he showed a love of the visual arts at an early age, and won his college degree in Theory of Criticism in the Visual Medium - at the time, the only American ever to do so. He spent several years as curator of the Archive of Popular Culture at the California State University, and stayed in the field after leaving to take on the West Coast editorship of a magazine called Mediascene and a publishing company, Atlas Comics. He did freelance publicity and research work on a number of media-related projects, including Leonard Mogel and Ivan Reitman's animated version of Heavy Metal. HM was a fantasy and sci-fi comic magazine from France, famous for work by media greats like French comic artist Jean 'Moebius' Giraud, and the film was a full-length animated feature comprising several short adaptations of the magazine's stories. Macek also wrote the text for The Art of Heavy Metal: Animation for the Eighties, an art book based on the film.

His career in the media and animation field continued with a move to Canada's Nelvana Animation studio, where he worked as a promotional and marketing co-ordinator. However, he became disillusioned with the industry's continual insistence that financial returns far outweighed any thought of creativity, and left in 1982. In the same year, he opened the Carl F Macek Gallery. A forum devoted to animation from all over the world, the Gallery displayed cels, production drawings, posters and other memorabilia from any

number of animated features and shorts. Among the items on display were cels from Tatsunoko Productions (creators of Speed Racer, Super Dimension Southern Cross, and Macross itself, among a host of others), and Macek found that these sold well. Investigating further, he came into contact with

other animation fans and began to learn about anime. The scope and breadth of the subject fascinated him: he heard about the surgeries performed on Japanese animation to lever it into the American market, and about the desires of fans to see more original, unaltered material.

A little anime existed in America at that time. At best, the shows were regarded as oddities; at worst, they were little

more than raw material, unsuitable for the children American companies were determined to aim them at, and so subject to appalling cuts, rewrites, and in the worst cases

(such as Tatsunoko's Science Ninja Team Gatchaman, released by Sandy Frank Productions as Battle of the Planets), the addition of new and inferior animation to paper the cracks. In contrast, Macek got to see some anime in its original form, as fans lent him videotapes posted to them by contacts in Japan.

Meanwhile, Ahmed Agrama was moving towards the same point in anime history as Macek, though from a different direction. Born in Cairo in 1955, he was introduced to the film industry when his parents formed a company called Graffiti Italiano in Rome. In his teens, Ahmed worked for the family business choosing American films for the company to translate and distribute. This taught

him a lot about the way films work, and what makes a piece suitable for translation; knowledge he put to more academic use when he moved

to Los Angeles in the 1970's to study theatrical arts at university.

With Ahmed as a contact in the States, Frank and Oli

Agrama travelled to

join him and form a new company there, called Agrama Films. In 1979, the Agramas created Intersound Incorporated, an integrated sound-and-vision studio which enabled Agrama Films to translate and re-record their films without recourse to outside companies. Finally, they had the system needed to handle



# EXPLOSION

by PETER J EVANS



the entire process themselves, and set it to work dubbing the TV programmes they owned for such diverse markets as Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Several of these were anime shows.

By 1982, Ahmed had perfected the Intersound studio, and decided to launch into the rich, but choppy, waters of the American TV market. He set up Harmony Gold USA, and began preparing dubbed versions of Agrama Films' various anime pilots and full-length features, including *Frankenstein* and *The Tomb of Dracula*, a 1980 feature from Toei Animation. They finished this first set of products early in 1984, and while hunting for publicity material, received word of some animation cels being sold by a local art gallery. That gallery was owned by Carl Macek.

Macek was suddenly presented with the perfect ear for his ideas about anime, and proceeded to bend it with all the knowledge and professionalism at his command. Harmony Gold realised that, instead of a few publicity cels, what they had in their grasp was a man who knew far more about the subject of Japanese animation than they did. Both parties had a lot to gain from each other. It was inevitable that they would join forces.

Macek was installed in Harmony Gold as a production executive. He had a good idea of which market to aim for - the film industry in America was mainly supported by the patronage of teenagers and young adults, and Macek wanted to capture the same demographic with Japanese animation. The Agramas gave him the green light to come up with a project that would hit the target audience dead-centre. By this time, Harmony Gold had the rights to a large collection of anime films and series. Searching through the lists, Macek decided upon *Super Dimension Fortress Macross*, basing his choice on the show's impressive storyline, visual qualities, and the popularity it enjoyed in Japan. He also knew that there were a lot of *Macross* fans amongst America's anime aficionados, so there would be the seeds of a ready-made audience. In mid-1984, Macek began work on a three-episode pilot, 70 minutes long and translated into English as closely as he could. Like any successful anime series, *Macross* had its fair share of merchandise, including a large number of toys and model kits based on the show's mecha. Late in the summer of 1984, Harmony Gold discovered that the American model company Revell Inc had the rights to those models in the States, and been selling them - along with similar models from other shows - under the



range-name of Robotech. This meant that Harmony Gold would be unable to supplement their returns with the merchandise they needed, and since Revell did not own the *Macross* name, their model line would get little recognition

from fans. The *Macross* pilot tape had proved a winner when it was shown at the World Science Fiction Convention in LA, and so Harmony Gold and Revell signed a co-licensing deal that would enable both companies to profit.

In a way, it was Revell's input which would save the project: although the pilot was selling well across the States, another hurdle would have to be jumped before the show would make it to TV. American TV stations tend to buy series which are long enough to syndicate - that is, run one episode every weekday. A syndicated series must be at least thirteen weeks long, requiring 65 episodes or more. *Macross*, as it stood, comprised only 36

episodes. Harmony Gold were halfway to simply releasing the series on video only, but Revell decided that they would sell far more models based on a TV show, and pushed hard for a syndicated solution.

Macek knew that Harmony Gold had the rights to a number of other Tatsunoko shows, and began searching through the lists to find material which shared styles or themes with *Macross*. He had a plan to merge three series into one, re-writing some of the storylines to produce a single, epic series. Finally, he decided on *Super Dimension Cavalry Southern Cross* and *Genesis Climber Mospeada*, and set about creating the story threads which would link the shows together and form an animated sci-fi drama 85 episodes long. Revell had already provided the project name, and in 1985, the Harmony Gold series *Robotech* finally hit the airwaves.

It must be remembered, at this point, that all three series that comprised *Robotech* were separate and wholly unconnected entities in Japan. The only links they had with each other were their producers (Tatsunoko), transforming mecha, and the fact that they all dealt with alien assaults upon a future Earth. In order to bring any of them to American screens, Carl Macek had to make the three into one, and the way in which he did this remains one of the most controversial and debated aspects of anime history.



To begin with, Macek needed a single, unifying thread of plot that would present the three shows as a logical sequence. This thread was to be protoculture, a concept mentioned in translations of the Macross background in a book called *Macross: Memory Perfect*. Originally, the word was used in reference to a time scale (Zentradi history is shown against the Protoculture Calender, or PC), and a race of 'protoculture beings' who investigated Earth in the distant past, colonised space with the use of 'Fold Flight' hyperdrives, and became extinct in a war between the Zentradi and the 'Inspection Group' (possibly those who spied on the ancient Earth), at around 22,000 PC.

Macek took this word and created his own concept. In the Robotech universe, protoculture became a biological power source of almost mystical qualities. Derived from a plant hoarded by the alien Invid, protoculture not only provided an almost limitless source of non-polluting power, but also allowed users of protoculture-driven machinery to psychically link with the device, giving a degree of control unattainable with simple electronics. Protoculture had aspects of science, religion, and even a rudimentary sentence on its own part, and formed an effective link between the three shows.

It was easy to remould Macross around the protoculture concept. The substance was both rare and valuable, and the crashed space fortress (renamed SDF-1, the name Macross being reserved for the island on which it lands) contains a protoculture factory of untold importance to the Zentradi. The power source had been harnessed by Terran scientists during the years, forming the basis for a new era of 'robotechnology' and making possible the construction of giant, transforming war machines. Barring this nebulous concept, the story of Macross remained essentially unchanged.

Super Dimension Cavalry Southern Cross was altered slightly more. In the original story, an alien race called the Zor launched an invasion attack on Earth from a number of huge, orbiting battlecraft, and sought to gain an advantage over the defending forces by using a brainwashed human as a spy. Southern Cross possessed an interesting narrative slant - the human defenders were portrayed as being just as xenophobic and destructive as the alien attackers, and it was often difficult to know just who the 'good guys' really were.

It is interesting to note at this point that Southern Cross did not fare well on Japanese screens. Confusing opening episodes led to fans abandoning the series before it hit its stride, and the planned 39 episodes was cut to a mere 23. History does

not record exactly what was due to happen in those missing 400 minutes of animation...

In Macek's version, the attackers were the Robotech Masters, creators of the Zentradi, who had sent their warrior race after the SDF-1 in Macross. Realising that the first attempt had failed, they followed their giant soldiers to Earth. The brainwashed spy became a clone of Zor himself, the alien scientist who had developed protoculture after stealing it from the Invid. Used as an unwitting agent by the Robotech Masters, Zor eventually turned against them and assisted in their downfall. In doing so, he causes the Invid Flower of Life (the biological source of protoculture) to seed itself over the planet.

This led to the third part of the Robotech saga. Genesis Climber Mospeada was yet another invaded-Earth tale, although this time the planet had succumbed to a vastly superior enemy and now lay in thrall to the vicious alien Invid. Macek merely determined that the Invid had been attracted to the planet's crop of Flower of Life, instinctively following the 'scent' of protoculture. Dialogue references were made to elements of the previous Robotech Defense Forces and character links, and the story joined its predecessors as a segment of Robotech. Unlike shows like the ill-fated Gatchaman, the three components of Robotech suffered almost no actual cutting or rearrangement. An 85th episode was created from Macross and Southern Cross footage to form a bridge between the first two segments, and there is evidence of some very minor cutting for nudity in Southern Cross. In Robotech Art 3, Macek hints at edits to remove 'ethnic gesture'. A direct, totally faithful and unaltered translation of the shows would have been exactly what the fans wanted, but without the narrative links, Macross and its sister-shows would simply not have seen airtime. It was a case of Robotech or nothing. Many of the original hard-core of anime fans in America and elsewhere got their start in the genre from watching Robotech (myself, for one), and it can be argued that the present boom in commercially available anime stems from that fandom. Without Carl Macek and Robotech, the market for Japanese animation might simply not exist. There were, however, other changes which make far less sense. The casts of all three shows contain characters from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, especially Southern Cross, whose character names were chosen to give the feel of a truly international fighting force. Macek changed nearly every name in the shows, making them almost universally Americanised. Some of the changes were designed to further the narrative links (Jeanne Francaix, Southern Cross' female lead was re-



cast as the daughter of Max and Miria Jiinas from Macross. Their names were changed to Max and Miriya Sterling, so Francaix became Dana Sterling), and while it is possible that names like Hikaru Ichijo and Hayao Kakizaki might have caused problems for an untutored American audience, others seem to have been simply altered to denote some kind of American superiority. Even more disturbing was Macek's habit of making any black character part of a single, extended negro family, as though there was only one black gene-line of note in the history of

the Robotech wars. Whether these alterations were due to any kind of racism on Macek's part, or simply stemmed from a desire to further the saga's narrative connections, has been a matter for quite heated debate since the series began. Nevertheless, it is certain that there were plenty of characters in the shows whose names were perfectly good as they were, and changes like the spelling of Minmay into Minmei seem very much like editing for its own sake.

If Macek had learned anything from



his investigations into Japanese animation, it was just how large a part merchandising plays in the success of an anime series. With his own publishing experience as guide, he decided that a major comic book line would help to keep the series in the public eye, and provide another line of products for fans to collect. While a project like Robotech would normally be taken on by one of the larger comic companies like Marvel or DC, Harmony Gold were impressed with the way a group called Comico went after the opportunity, and awarded them the contract. Comico became the first independent comics company to produce a major anime license. The first issue came out while the pilot was still making the rounds, and as such was titled *Macross*. It also contained some of the original names (Zentradis instead of Zentradi, Valkyie instead of Vertitech), and some that appear to have come out of nowhere (Hikaru Ichijo, altered by Carl Macek into Rick Hunter, is named Rick Yamata

in the first comic). However, by issue #2 (in April 1985), the format had settled into its fully Americanised version. Comico released serialisations of the other to Robotech segments practically in parallel with *Macross*, with issue #1 of *Robotech Masters* (Southern Cross) and *Robotech: The New Generation* (Mospeada) published in July of 1985. The final issue, that of *Robotech: The Macross Saga* #36, was sold in February 1989. Another Robotech merchandising line came in March 1987, with the first in a series of Robotech novels. Written by Jack McKinney (a pseudonym for Brian Daley, author of the Han Solo trilogy and a number of film novelisations including *Tron*, and James Luceno), and published by Del Rey / Ballantine Books, the line adapted the TV series into twelve paperbacks; six for *Macross*, and three each for the other two segments. The books were well-written (unlike the comics, whose art and scripting were often amateurish at best), and interesting for

the way in which the author used literary devices to cover some of the series' more glaring inconsistencies. The quasi-mystical nature of protoculture provided many a get-out: when Rick Hunter opens his Veritech's cockpit canopy in the middle of a power-dive (in reality, an action which would result in the instant loss of the canopy and, quite possibly, the entire aircraft) it is the vessel's protoculture interface which provides the exacting forces needed to prevent its destruction. Later in the same novel, the SDF-1's fold system flings the ship and a large globe of air, land, and sea out into Plutonian orbit. In the anime, the water instantly freezes, rather than undergoing the much more complicated (and difficult to animate) boiling / freezing / exploding more likely under the circumstances. McKinney throws a handy protoculture force-field around the globe for a while, holding back the laws of physics for the requisite amount of time.

Robotech's popularity in the States

both allowed and necessitated the release of more merchandising material. While FASA used *Macross* mecha designs for their *Battledroids* board game (later re-named *Battletech*, to provide at least a nod to Harmony Gold, although no mention of Tatsunoko appears on their copyright notices), Palladium Books entered the field with the first volume of their Robotech role-playing game. Written by Kevin Siembieda, these game books contain a quite amazing amount of detail about both Robotech and *Macross*. With volumes dedicated to all the three segments, plus a number of source-books and supplements, these books provide probably the most complete overview of the Robotech universe available.

It quickly became clear that Robotech had become the success that everyone at Harmony Gold had hoped for. The series was placed in over 110 American markets and around 70 percent of the rest of the world. In addition to this, initial ratings performances were good, and a major toy manufacturer, Matchbox International, had been acquired to produce dedicated Robotech toys. Harmony Gold received a considerable amount of fan mail, much of which focused on the open-ended nature of the *Macross* saga, and demanding to know about the future exploits of their favourite characters.

This reaction set the people at Harmony Gold thinking. There were no plans in Japan to produce a sequel to *Macross* (although there were a huge number of Japanese fans who would have welcomed such a project), but perhaps it would be possible to take Robotech a stage further. In the autumn of 1985 a team of Tatsunoko representatives - Ippei Kuri, Koki Narushima, Hiroshi Iwata and Kenji Yoshida - joined people from Harmony Gold and Matchbox in Los Angeles to discuss a project of then unheard-of proportions: a sequel to the Robotech saga, made by both Japan and America on an equal footing. The series was mooted for TV release in the autumn of 1986, and was to be called *Robotech II: The Sentinels*.

The funding for this show was to come from a deal between Harmony Gold and Matchbox. The toy company had invested a large sum tooling up for a range of Robotech toys which were untested in the marketplace, and the 65 planned episodes of *Sentinels* would assure them a considerable financial return. Far from being a thrown-together project to cash in on the success of Robotech, *Sentinels* was planned from the start as a prestige production. Intersound would provide a soundtrack recorded entirely in stereo, while the animation would be filmed using a Bosch tele-cine converter to make the 16mm image





comparable in quality to that from 35mm stock. An international team of designers, storyboard artists, and writers were brought in to construct the epic storyline. Tatsunoko looked on Sentinels as a chance to prove themselves in an international market. They were able to provide a large number of design and story ideas - as mentioned before, Southern Cross was axed in Japan before completing its run, and many of the unused concepts were given a second lease of life in the new sequel. The production work on Sentinels had to be carefully monitored in Japan: no mention could be made of a sequel to Macross, or fans would have been in uproar. The differences between the original show and Macek's version would not have been understood. Code names were established for certain characters (those who had kept their Japanese names, like Breetai and Exedore), and some of the character designs were altered to disguise their origin.

The differences between Macross and Robotech proved a major bugbear for the writing team. Long sessions of bilingual brainstorming were necessary to clarify the saga in the minds of the Tatsunoko team. The two weeks that they spent in Los Angeles were packed with a crash course in Robotech, which continued in November 1985 when a team from Harmony Gold - led by Frank Agrama and Carl Macek himself - travelled to Tokyo and took up residence in the New Otani Hotel. From here, they co-ordinated the pre-production work on Sentinels. The story that evolved takes place in the fifteen-year gap between the end of Macross and the beginning of Robotech Masters. Nine years after the destruction of the SDF-1 and SDF-2, a third space fortress has been completed and stands ready to journey to the homeworld of the Robotech Masters on a diplomatic mission. Lead members of the team include Rick Hunter and Lisa

Hayes, who must divide time between preparing for the mission and for their imminent wedding day, Max and Miriya Sterling, and the Zentradi Breetai and Exedore, in micronized form. Ironically, as the mission sets out, the crew have no idea that the Robotech Masters have already been conquered by the Invid, and are on their way to do the same to Earth. While the SDF-3 battles the Invid in deep space, their home is ravaged by the second and third Robotech wars (as shown in Robotech segments two and three). The plot of Sentinels has been likened to a space-bound version of the Pacific campaign in WWII, with the Robotech Expeditionary Force 'island hopping' from planet to planet, freeing various groups of bizarre aliens from the implacable Invid. In true Japanese style, eventual victory would be won only at terrible cost, and the story would end with the SDF-3 lost in space, possibly giving rise to a third series (tentatively dubbed Robotech: Odyssey). However, events were to conspire against the Sentinels in the real world. Despite the series being licensed to over 60 percent of America by the time of the 1986 Toy Fair (when Matchbox would present their range of new Robotech toys), the American dollar had been faring so badly against the Japanese yen that the budget allowed for the show effectively dropped by over a quarter. It soon became clear that the money would only cover thirty-six episodes at most. At this point, it might have been possible to continue the project, releasing the series with the original Robotech to make up the episode total required for syndication. If sales of the Matchbox toy line had been high enough, Sentinels may have survived. As it was, the initial sell-through amounted to less than one-third the expected amount. The Sentinels project was halted with only one episode completed, and animation finished for the next three. After the success of Robotech, this defeat must have been especially crushing for Macek and the Harmony Gold team. Nevertheless, the story as developed for the show has seen the light of day, both in a continuing comic series from Eternity Comics and a second run of novelisations from Jack McKinney. The completed animation was rearranged and released in 1988 as a kind of American OAV; a 76-minute video available in this country from Video Gems. If this was the last chapter in the history of Macross, it would be an ignoble end indeed. But while the American side of the project had folded under the combined weight of finance and commercial demand, the popularity of the series in Japan had simply not gone away. In 1992, the Macross would once again give birth to itself. A new beginning was on the way.

**Super Dimension Fortress Macross / Robotech: The Macross Saga**  
Name and terminology changes:  
*While many of the character names in Macross were altered when Carl Macek re-wrote the scripts for an American audience, the characters themselves remained essentially unaltered. The list here shows the degree to which Macek American-ised the names, and occasionally altered alien names to equally alien, but different, versions:*

Japanese Name	American Name
Hikaru Ichijo	Rick Hunter
Misa Hayase	Lisa Hayes
Lynn Minmay	Lynn Minmei
Roy Fokker	Roy Fokker
Claudia LaSalle	Claudia Grant
Bruno J Grobal	Henry J Glocal
Vanessa	Vanessa
Kim	Kim
Shammie	Sammie
Maximilian Jiinas+	Max Sterling
Hayao Kakizaki	Ben Dixon
Lynn Kaifun	Lynn Kyle
Miria Fariina	Miriya
Komiria Maria Jiinas	Dana Sterling*
Britai Kridanik	Breetai
Exedore Formo	Exedore
Kamjin Krashvera	Khyron
Bodolza	Dolza
Konda	Konda
Rico	Rico
Walera	Bron
Lap Lamiz	Azonias
Oigur	Grell

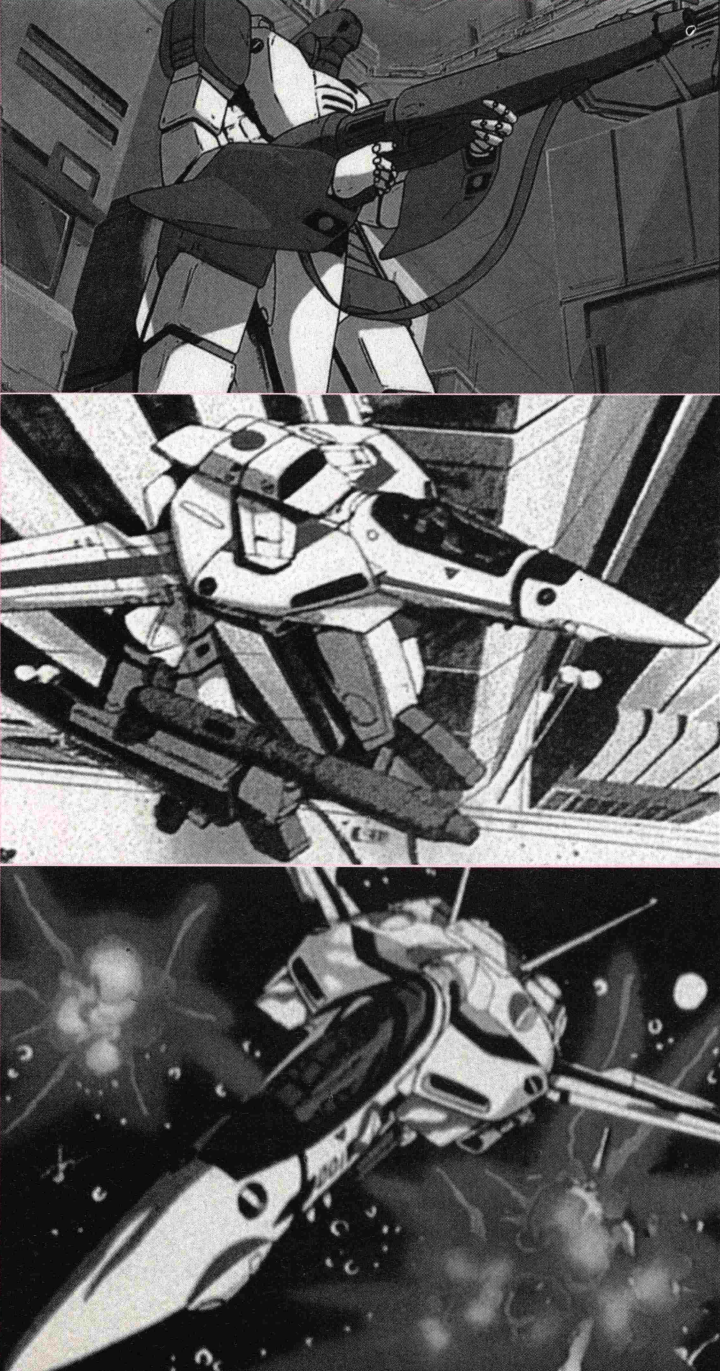
+Sometime written as Genus, possibly in reference to 'genius' (he was a natural-born ace pilot, after all). Since there is no exact rule for the transliteration of the katakana used to write his name, the correct spelling is open to debate.

\*Note that this refers to the baby of Max and Miria Jiinas in Macross. The Dana Sterling in Robotech Masters, while re-written as an adult version of the same character, was actually Jeanne Francaix and as such unconnected with Macross.

The show's mecha also underwent the re-naming process, for even more unfathomable reasons. Slight differences in specification were introduced, mainly due to the adoption of proto-culture as a power source. Other than this, the specifications given in the first chapter of this article can be assumed to apply:

Japanese	American
VF-1 Valkyrie	VF-1 Veritech
Battroid	Battloid
Gerwalk	Guardian*
Tomahawk MBR-04-MK VI	Excalibur
Spartan MBR-07-MK II	Gladiator
Monster HWR-00-MK II	MAC II
Defender ADR-04-MK X	Raidar X
Phalanx SDR-04-MK XII	Spartan
Tactical Pod Regult	Tactical Battle Pod
Tactical Pod Glaug	Officer's Battle Pod
Nousjadeul-Ger	Power Armour (Male)
Queadlunn-Rau	Battle Suit
	Power Armour (Female)
SDF Macross	SDF-1

\*The highly visible control levers in the Veritech cockpit (Marked 'B', 'G', and 'F') necessitated alternate terminology with the same initials. Battloid is probably what the Japanese writers were trying to say with Battroid anyway, and Gerwalk (Ground Effective Reinforcement of Winged Armament with Locomotive Knee-joint) is just as meaningless as Guardian, if not more so. Note that this is the only piece of Macross terminology to survive by mistake into issue #2 of the Robotech comic.



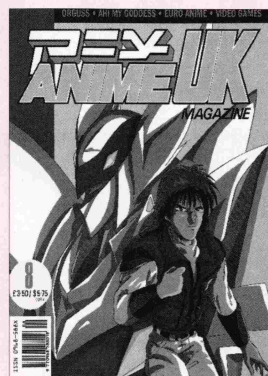


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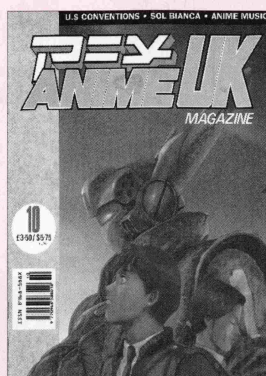
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### THE STORY

A mysterious rock rises from the South Pacific beneath the plutonium tanker 'Kairyu Maru' (Sea Dragon, captained by Akira Kubo, Toho fantasy movie actor from NIHON TANJO/Birth of Japan [1 Nov 1959] to KESSEN! NANKAI NO DAI KAUU/Space Amoeba [1 August 1970]). The captain of the escort ship 'Nojima' is Kojiro Hongo (from Gamera's 2nd-4th movies, see filmography). The Nojima's security officer Yoshinari Yonemori (Tsuyoshi Ihara) persuades Marine Insurer Naoya Kusanagi to join him in investigating the drifting rock, which turns out to have ancient curved jewels and an inscribed tablet embedded in it. A jewel links Kusanagi's daughter Asagi (ex-campaign girl Ayako Fujitani) with the creature which emerges from the rock. A translation reveals that it's Gamera, the guardian god of Atlantis, arch-enemy of Gyaos.

Ornithologist Mayumi Nagamine (Shinobu Nakayama from GOJIRA VS MEKAGOJIRA, 11 Dec 1993) and Keiji Osako (Jiro Hotaruyki from the ZEIRAM series, 1991 and 1994) discovered Gyaos after its attacks on Himegami and Onokojima Islands. In the ruins of one village they find a giant pile of guano containing the pen and glasses of Nagamine's professor. The army are brought in (SDF Officer Satake is Hatsunori Hasegawa of UROTORAMAN 80) and Nagamine & Osako plan to lure the three Gyaos into Fukuoka Baseball Dome and trap them.

Yonemori arrives at the dome to warn of Gamera, who arrives just as the Gyaos cut free using sonic beam shrieks. Gamera kills one, retracts its limbs, shoots out plasma jets and flies off in pursuit of the others! Subsequent monster battles prove Gamera is the defender of humans, although the army still shoot it down. Every time Gamera is injured, corresponding injuries appear on Asagi's body. And while she and Gamera are comatose after a fight at Mt. Fuji, the asexually reproductive surviving Gyaos triples its size to 85m.

The new improved Gyaos flies into Tokyo. The SDF attack, accidentally blow Tokyo Tower in half, and Gyaos nests in the wreckage (a striking shot). Gamera arrives and battles Gyaos through city and space, but cannot match Gyaos for sheer speed and savagery. Who will survive, and what will be left of them?

### BACKGROUND

GAMERA has had the VS GODZILLA facelift, with high production values, a good monster movie plot, punchier editing and impressive special effects. The matte, computer and miniature effects are amazing, although the scale of the monsters to actual buildings still varies. The miniature streets are incredibly detailed, down to the litter and scattered in-jokes. The monsters are portrayed with models, animatronics and muppets, and suits worn by Takateru Manabe and Jun Suzuki as Gamera, and Yumi Kameyama as Gyaos (the first female monster-player; her surname means 'Turtle Mountain'). Like VS GODZILLA, the new GAMERA comes at you with a battery of media, as the story unfolds through computer graphics, infra-vision, regular film and TV video - using actual newscasters.

Gyaos is quite a scary creature with its crazy eyes and its thrilling setpiece swoops on the streets of Onokojima and the bridge at Kisosan, and it's a savage critter too. The previous GAMERA films, despite being aimed at young children, were more gruesome than the GODZILLA series, with mutilation, impaling and blood letting (albeit green or blue) in most entries, and there are several ghastly scenes here too; but the originals would never have let a coach full of soccer-supporting kids be attacked without a last minute flying turtle rescue.

The human heroes are also a lot different from before. Nagamine and Asagi

# SFXPRESS

# GAMERA

## THE GUARDIAN OF THE UNIVERSE



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are both women and a lot older than the original's infants (and played by decent actors too). Asagi clearly owes more to VS GODZILLA's psychic woman Miki than her GAMERA predecessors, and I liked the idea of her and Gamera's survival being mutually dependent.

The major difference I noticed between the new and the old GAMERA was the absence of the deliriously silly moments which made the originals worth watching. Once you're over the concept of a giant flying fire-breathing heroic turtle the new film is relatively straightforward. In the first Gyaos movie, by way of comparison, it blows icy fog from its nipples and its defeat involves getting it dizzy with a revolving restaurant. While this latest is a better made movie, its thrills are not too different from the present GODZILLA series; but I look forward to seeing how Gamera develops - now that Daiei has merged with Toho, the list of prospective opponents for GAMERA 2 includes the Big G himself!

*Daiei Monster Update I'd Like to See : does anyone apart from Steve Kyte and I remember DAI MAJIN?*

GAMERA : DAIKAJU KUCHU KESSEN (GAMERA : GREAT MONSTER AERIAL BATTLE) aka GAMERA THE GUARDIAN OF THE UNIVERSE

Toho/Daiei, 11 March 1995  
95 min 22 sec

Director Shusuke Kaneko  
(1999 NO NATSU YASUMI - 1988; NECRONOMICON - 1993)

SFX Shinji Higuchi  
(GOJIRA - 1984, UROTORA O ZA MUBI : MOSHI NO DENSETSU

1990, MIKADROID - 1991, UROTORAMAN PAWADO monster designer)

Script Kazunori Ito  
(Anime since 1981 - URUSEI YATSURA, DIRTY PAIR, MAISON IKKOKU, KIRO KEISATSU PATLABOR, KIRO KEISATSU PATLABOR THE MOVIE 2. Live action - UROTORAMAN PAWADO, NECRONOMICON)

Music : Kow Otani.  
End titles song 'Shinwa' by Bakufu Slump.

## GAMERA FILMOGRAPHY

DAIKAIJU GAMERA (Great Monster Gamera) aka GAMMERA/GAMMERA THE INVINCIBLE,  
27 Nov 1965, 78 min

DAIKAIJU KETTO : GAMERA TAI BARUGON (Great Monster Duel : Gamera Vs Barugon) aka GAMERA VERSUS BARUGON / THE WAR OF THE MONSTERS [Barugon also cameos in the COMPILER OVA 'YO NO SHO', 10 May 1994],  
17 April 1966, 100 min

DAIKAIJU KUCHUSEN : GAMERA TAI GYAOSU (Great Monster Air War : Gamera Vs Gyaos) aka GAMERA VS GYAOS/ THE RETURN OF THE GIANT MONSTERS/ BOYICHI AND THE SUPERMONSTER,  
15 March 1967, 87 min

GAMERA TAI UCHU KAIJU BAIRASU (Gamera Vs Space Monster Viras) aka GAMERA VERSUS VIRAS/ DESTROY ALL PLANETS,  
20 March 1968, 81 min

GAMERA TAI WARUJU GIRON (Gamera Vs Wicked Beast Guiron) aka GAMERA VERSUS GUIRON/ ATTACK OF THE MONSTERS (cameo by Gyaos)  
21 March 1969, 82 min

GAMERA TAI DAIMAJU JAIGA (Gamera Vs Great Demon Beast Jiger) aka GAMERA VERSUS JIGER/ GAMERA VERSUS MONSTER X/ MONSTERS INVADE EXPO 70,  
21 March 1970, 83 min

GAMERA TAI SHINKU KAIJU JIGURA (Gamera Vs Deep Sea Monster Jigura) aka GAMERA VERSUS ZIGRA,  
17 July 1971, 88 min

UCHU KAIJU GAMERA (Space Monster Gamera) aka SUPER MONSTER [All monster footage edited from other movies. Also uses footage from UCHU SENKAN YAMATO and GINGA TETSUDO 999]  
20 March 1980, 91 min

### UNMADE GAMERA

GAMERA TAI SOTO KAIHU W (Gamera Vs Two-Headed Monster W) scripted @ 1972

GAMERA TAI DAIJAJUGARASHAAPU (Gamera Vs Great Evil Beast Garasharp) scripted @ 1991.

All Gamera monsters used & unused appear in MANGA BOYS COMICS SPECIAL : DAI KAIJU GAMERA (Script by Kenichiro Terasawa, art by Ryu Hariken, 1995). Others were 'Choakuju (Super Bad Beast) Futakobukarappa', 'Kaiso Kaiju (Seaweed Monster) Geborasu, Chitei Kaiju (Monster from the Bowels of the Earth', Harinezura (Harinezumi = Hedgehog), and 'Uchu Kaiju Maurgarappa' (a Moonheaded kappa)





*Japan Rocks!*

*We are ninja (not geisha):*

# THE FRANK CHICKENS

The Frank Chickens are a trio, or a duo. Sometimes they're more like an octo. But anyway, they're all Japanese. Apart from the ones who aren't. In fact, the Frank Chickens are a nebulous entity, born from the London Musicians' Collective. They've had more members over the last ten years than Spinal Tap have had drummers, but the one unifying figure is the incomparable Kazuko Hohki. This one-woman entertain-

ment conglomerate is a journalist, singer, dancer, puppeteer (don't ask, but it involves Godzilla and Jack Kerouac) and educational psychology graduate. She also hosted Kazuko's Karaoke Club for Channel 4 in 1987, whose quick demise brought sighs of relief from all over TV-land. Hohki is a practiced outsider, a professional gaijin if you will, whose concentrated weirdness has also received attention in her





country of origin. She even wrote and starred in a Japanese sit-com called 90 DAYS TOTENHAM PUB, about the Frank Chickens' ill-fated attempt to marry gay English aristocrats for a visa fiddle. There's a lot of it about in Tottenham.

Hohki's other claim to fame in her homeland is her concerted efforts to convince the Japanese that England isn't all red buses and Harrods. Her book *Underfloor World* is a tourist guide for the Japanese non-tourist in the UK, presumably citing Tottenham as a major spot of perverse historical interest. If you have ever seen the UK depicted on Japanese television, you will see something very difficult from 'real life'. The Japanese media present a very idealised picture of our faraway land, selling Nescafé on the idea that it is drunk by tweeded Oxbridge undergraduates, with tourist programmes that concentrate on the more asinine elements of our national culture. Thus it is that Kazuko Hohki's songs can really shock her home audience, who are faced with tales about the wide boy 'Johnny Reggae', and the dreary everyday life of 'Living in Tottenham'.

Hohki lives in the no-man's-land between her two 'homes', and she is equally uncompromising in her treatment of traditional Japanese



stereotypes. 'We are ninja' is arguably their trademark; a poppy track that says while Westerners like to think of Japanese girls as demure geisha, these girls would rather be assassins: "You're a ninja / I'm a ninja / Amidst the blinding sand / we disappear." They also claim to feel up alligators on the train; not the kind of girls you'd like to meet among the cherry blossoms, that's for sure. The real joy in 'We are ninja' comes when you find out the nonsensical chants in the background actually mean something in Japanese; this is another typically Frank Chickens touch, and it can lend a whole new level of appreciation to their music, not unlike discovering 'Showaddywaddy'

means something obscene in Swahili. (It doesn't, by the way).

There is similar in-er-face bricolage in 'Do the karaoke', which begins like one more depressing Japanese ballad, but soon perks up when we hear "...I dumped my love in the Sumida river." 'Some of the Frank Chickens' best work is in a similar vein, not only because they can have a lot of fun mincing up the lyrics of traditional songs, but also because they can show off their musical ability. Some songs sound suspiciously like those 80s 'electronic' hits, where some muppet had just discovered what the green button did on his Casio, but there are also some marvellous tracks which incorporate traditional

supporting instrumentals from the obscenely talented Clive Bell. The Frank Chickens remain very much a live group, rather than studio performers. Occasionally the songs on their albums seem to be missing a certain something, and you can only find out exactly what when you see them live. Hohki makes no secret of her wish to be a permanent amateur, kicking her heels around the edges of the Tokyo/London pop scene and doing her best never to become 'too English' or 'too Japanese'. She told the Tokyo Journal that London is the best place for her to 'be herself', and her real vocation seems to be standing up in front of bemused foreigners and trying to get them to be as zany and free as she is. This is what you'll see at a Frank Chickens concert, where you're treated to their silly costumes, their insane dancing, and their nasty habit of dragging members of the audience up on stage to humiliate themselves. This is not a particularly 'Japanese' habit, unless you count karaoke bars as institutions of ritualised humiliation, but this is yet another thing that makes Hohki and friends so exciting. They are not exclusively Japanese or exclusively British, but they live in a strange world between both cultures, and that gives them an insight and appeal that calls out to the weird in us all.

JONATHAN CLEMENTS

#### AUK ROCK DOC: The Frank Chickens

We are Frank Chickens 1984  
Best of Frank Chickens 1987 (remix with extra tracks)  
Cheeba Cheeba Chimpira; Mothra; Green Banana; Madame Fatal; We Are Ninja (not Geisha); Yellow Detective; Shellfish Bamboo; Pikadon; We are Frank Chickens; Sake Ballad.  
Extra tracks: China Night; Arirang; Japanese Rhumba; Fujiyama Mama. Political incorrectness is the order of the day, with a jokey little tale about Hiroshima ('Pikadon'), as well as the trademark 'We are Ninja' and 'We are Frank Chickens.' The remix album really goes into an enka blitz, with several traditional songs sung in a more-or-less serious fashion. Then again, they do use the old wartime term for China in 'China Night', really ham it up on the 'Sake Ballad' (with helpful bilingual lyrics) and round it off with the daft 'Japanese Rhumba' and a Hawaiian guitar solo on "...I'm a Fujiyama Mama / and I'm just about to blow my top!"

Get Chickenized 1987  
We Say You Say; Sacred Marriage; Street Angels; Tokyo; Two Little Ladies; Solid Life; Japanese Girl; Island Inside; Young Summer; Chicken Ondo; Yellow Toast (plus extra tracks on CD); One Million Hamburgers; Monster; The Dark; House of Ninja.  
Ten-to-one you can't dance to it, but the 'House of Ninja' is still a fun little ditty. 'The Dark' is an excellent dissonant ballad which manufactures English lyrics out of the nonsensical Japanese homonyms ("kuroi hana, kuroi ana") for black hole and dark nostrils. And 'One Million Hamburgers' is another great bilingual song, giving us all the chance to find out the counting word for hamburgers, and lampooning you-know-

who at the same time: "We may be small and perfect Japs / But we still get.... MAC ATTACK."

Club Monkey (1988)  
Club Monkey remix (1989)  
Club Monkey; Wanting for a Dog; Burn that Body; Revolution; Night Drain; Feed Me; Jackie Chan; Shaken by God's Hand; MYTH; Hey Dead; Club Monkey (reprise).  
Remix version contains extra tracks: Do the Karaoke & Blue Canary.  
Serves very well as a demonstration of how the minor keys of Japanese traditional music fits so well with the minor keys of blues, especially in 'Wanting for a Dog' with lyrics like "Doggies are nice / cook them in oil / I get so high / When I see them boil." A nice Harold Faltermeyer rip-off on 'Burn that body', as well as a giggle on 'Jackie Chan' for anyone old enough to remember Chaka Khan. Extreme cruelty has been lovingly done to 'Shaken by God's Hand', which has been carefully ruined by the simple addition of a mouth harp. Clive Bell's flute-playing crops up every now and then, too; as well as a slice of belly-dancing music that seems to have been inserted in 'Night Drain' purely for a laugh. Recommended, especially the remixed version, since it's the one with the daft karaoke song on it.

Pretty Frank Chickens (1992)  
Yummy Yummy Yummy; Robot Love; My Resistance is Low; Sayonara Rockefeller; Living in Tottenham; Werewolf Woman; Total Recall; Mister Limbo; Surfin' Albania; Megalomaniacs. Contains some of their best material, including a version of 'My resistance is low' beautifully transformed by Clive Bell on the flute. 'Megalomaniacs,' with its catchy chorus, and the Beach Boys' idea of Japanese water torture

'Surfin' Albania.' As for 'Sayonara Rockefeller', what would Rockefeller say if he could see that the building with his name is now owned by a Japanese conglomerate? Ooh, bit of politics there...

Another recommended title, and not just because their manager said he'd give me a fiver if I plugged this one.

Underfloor World (UK release 1995)  
One Step; Different; Madman in Manchester; Time is a Passerby (in Tokyo); Johnny Reggae; Miniature Whae; Annabella; Thunderwing; Ring Road; Yukashita; Welcome to the Space.  
For a change Hohki's main audience is Japan and not Britain, and so her iconoclasm is aimed more at dispelling Japanese illusions. Accordingly we get songs about Manchester and London, as well as the standard fare, with someone that sounds uncannily like the Rebel MC on a couple of tracks.

(Solo albums)  
Kazuko Hohki chante Brigitte Bardot "Everybody wanted to be BB" (!)  
Love in Rainy Days (Lots of songs about rain...)

And not forgetting Kazuko's guest appearance on the new album from Bing Selfish

and the Ideals, Binging it all Back Home. That's it, I can't take any more. If the Frank Chickens prove hard to track down, an ssae to Eggy Pop records, 149 Gibson Gardens, London, N6 7HH might be all you need...

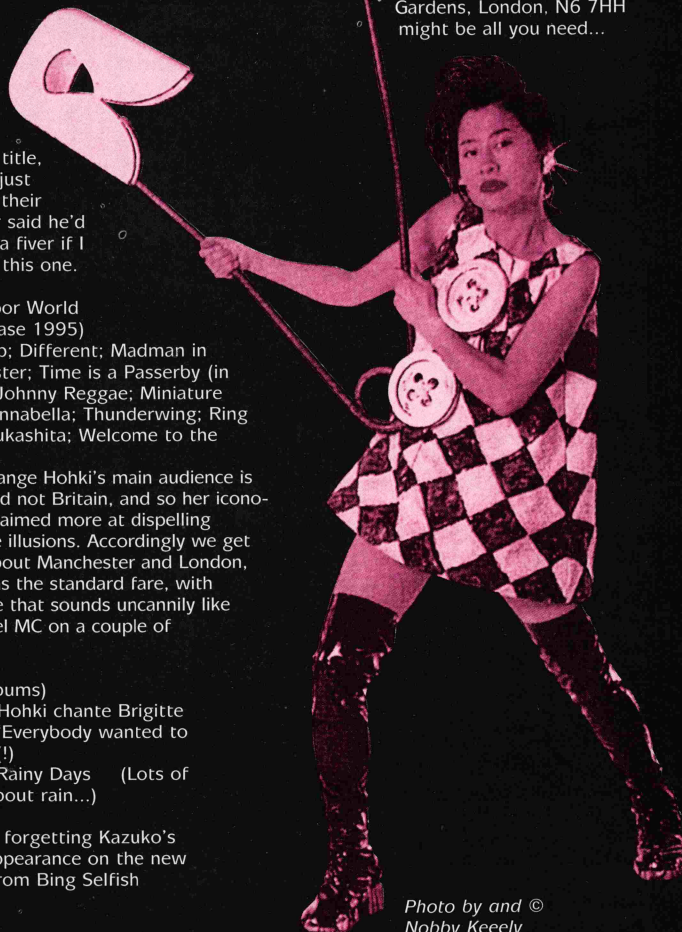
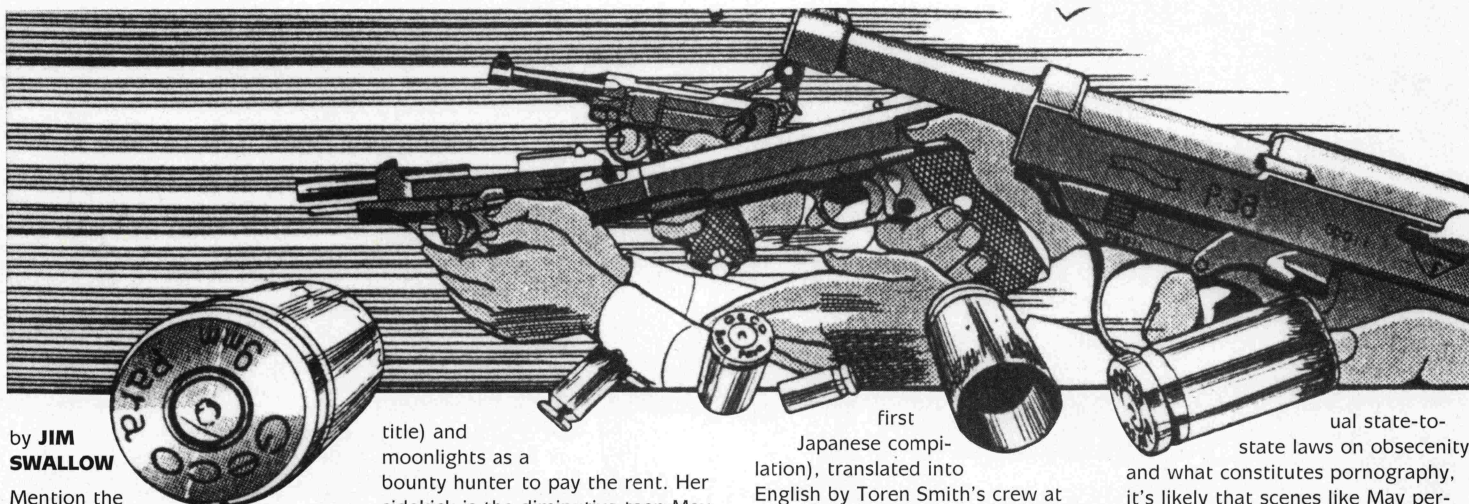


Photo by and ©  
Nobby Keely



## MANGA IN FOCUS:

## OCTANE AND CORDITE



by **JIM SWALLOW**

Mention the name Kenichi Sonoda and the majority of anime fans in the know will instantly picture the SF tough-girl casts of BUBBLEGUM CRISIS, BUBBLEGUM CRASH or GALL FORCE; Sonoda's deft talent at rendering attractive and dynamic female characters alongside slick mecha hardware is readily apparent to anyone looking. But what's not immediately visible is his love affair with more earthly, but no less exciting subjects. A self-confessed gun-nut and fast-car fan-boy, Kenichi Sonoda's lifelong purpose seemed to be able to blend his dreams of cute women, speedy cars and big guns into one seamless whole; He almost made it when he created and directed the one-shot O.A.V. RIDING BEAN, a headlong demolition derby through the streets of Chicago (showing off Sonoda's love for the city he first glimpsed in THE BLUES BROTHERS). But then in 1991 he got the mixture right, penning possibly the most bullet-filled speed-fest of a comicbook title ever seen - GUNSMITH CATS. Like the best (or worst) excesses of any Hong Kong gunbuster gangster flick, GUNSMITH CATS is packed to the whiskers with enough octane and cordite to start a hell of a lot of fires. The closest thing to an action movie on paper, GUNSMITH CATS is very much a "big boys' toys" manga, lovingly rendering artwork detailing firearm, sports car and hot body girls with the same otaku-force intensity. Kenichi is clearly a man who loves his work, as noted in the small sidenotes that dot the book. As each new gun appears in the hands of a character, a tiny thread of text will identify the make, calibre and loads it's using. A real stickler for accuracy, is our Ken.

The story revolves around one Rally Vincent, a dusky skinned woman who owns an upmarket gun store in Chicago (the "Gunsmith Cats" of the

title) and moonlights as a bounty hunter to pay the rent. Her sidekick is the diminutive teen May Hopkins, Mini-May to her friends, a blonde, blue-eyed slip of a girl with uncanny skills in explosives, a nice line in hand grenades and a penchant for getting naked. With Rally's dead-eye skills in blowing off people's thumbs and May's talent for ordinance, they pack a punch that equals more than just bullets and bombs. Set in the same 'universe' as RIDING BEAN (the man himself actually guest-stars in later stories), GUNSMITH CATS follows the girls in their bad-guy-busting partnership, which like in all good buddy movies is a little shaky to begin with. Sonoda takes a page or two out of Hollywood road movies like BULLITT, THE DRIVER, and the aforementioned THE BLUES BROTHERS to craft a series of pacey urban crime adventures, in the best tradition of high-concept actioners like the LETHAL WEAPON movies and tense gunplay-laden thrillers like DIE HARD. You've seen these scenes before

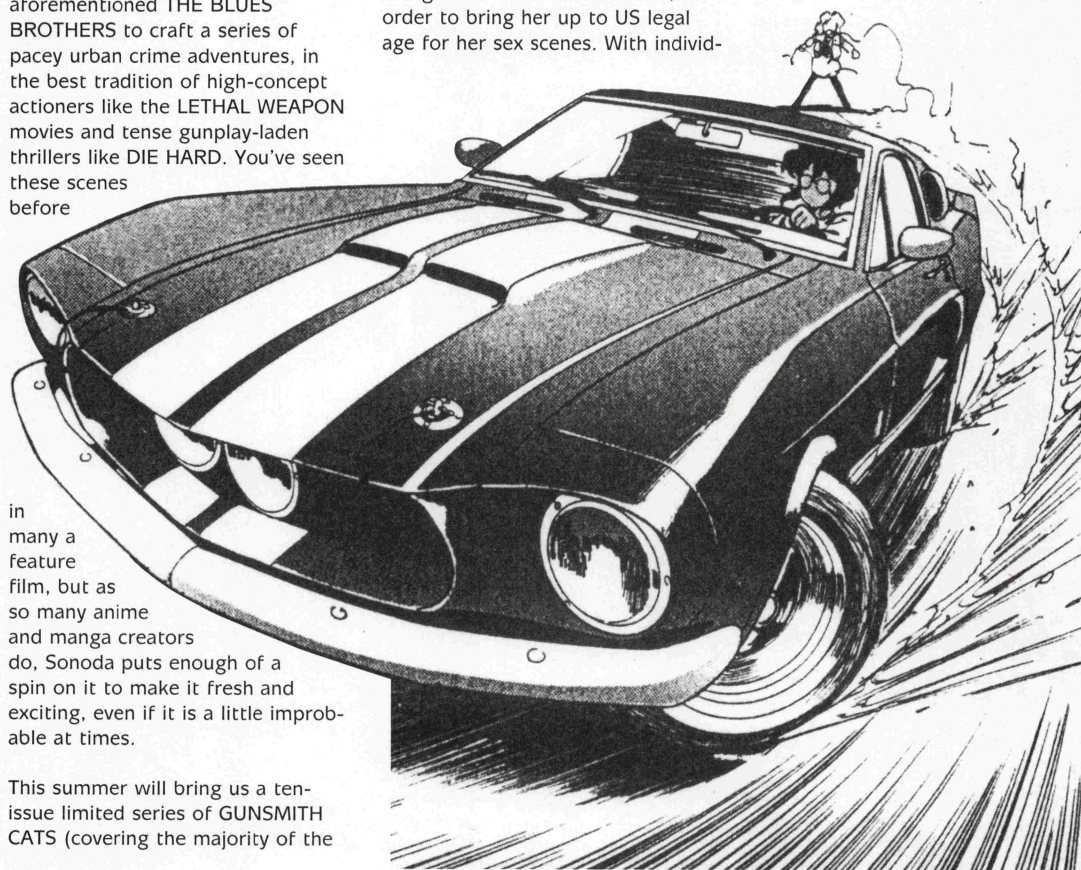
in many a feature film, but as so many anime and manga creators do, Sonoda puts enough of a spin on it to make it fresh and exciting, even if it is a little improbable at times.

This summer will bring us a ten-issue limited series of GUNSMITH CATS (covering the majority of the

first Japanese compilation), translated into English by Toren Smith's crew at Studio Proteus and published by Dark Horse Comics. The Proteus/Dark Horse combo has gained much respect among manga enthusiasts through sheer quality of work, and GUNSMITH CATS will no doubt be another winner; but like Masumune Shirow's cyberpunk drama GHOST IN THE SHELL, American legislation on comicbooks means that sacrifices will be made. In Shirow's work, a sexually explicit scene was replaced in it's second printing by the author himself, and this is the version reaching the West. But as Toren Smith said in an interview last year (ANIME UK #14) the age of May had to be upped by a year from 17 in the original manga to 18 in the translation, in order to bring her up to US legal age for her sex scenes. With individ-

ual state-to-state laws on obscenity and what constitutes pornography, it's likely that scenes like May performing oral sex (with the genitalia tastefully greyed-out, naturally) or masturbating will be straight on the cutting room floor, rather than risk an innocent comicshop owner in the Bible-belt being slammed in jail. Fans who gnash their teeth and pout when translators presume to tamper with material would do well not to lose sight of this fact; Better, perhaps, to cut a little than not to have at all.

Currently into its fifth volume in Japan, what you have here is a more bloody version of the Dirty Pair in twentieth century colours, combined with enough attention to





detail to make this the ideal back-up strip in either GUNS & AMMO or AMERICAN SPORTSCAR MAGAZINE. Now, I've skated around the issue for a bit, so I'll come to the point that most readers will have picked up by now; GUNSMITH CATS has a strong sexist element...It's very much an otaku wish-fulfillment piece, combining Sonoda's three great loves (guns, cars and girls, in case you missed the point) in a medium that appeals to likeminded fanboys (like me, bless 'im). Is it demeaning or degrading to women? Rally and May are never foils or fey playthings for the male characters - they always lead the action and run the risks, in the line of fire or in bed, so they can never be labelled as male-dominated. It's never the men who save the day (exempting the occasional Bean Bandit appearance), it's always the ladies who run to the rescue in the inevitable eleventh-hour cliffhanger...But if you strip away the fine outer linings, you'll find that GUNSMITH CATS is more than a little 'pornographic', in the same way that PISTOL & TARGET is gun porn and AUTOSPORT is car porn. To it's due, the manga doesn't pretend to be anything other than a wet-dream fanboy fantasy trip - With words and pictures as good as Sonoda's, that alone would be a good enough recipe for this manga reader, but with the added rein-

forcement of finely tuned characterisations behind the leads, the best gets better.

The future for the girls is a rosy and hopeful one, with Sonoda working on-again, off-again on the GUNSMITH CATS anime (how he finds time to do it between cleaning his guns I'll never know), and in the meantime the translated manga release will gain a new legion of devotees in the West while the complied volumes still appear on shelves in Japanese-language book-stores. Whatever the future adventures of Rally and May hold, one sure thing is that people who read the manga will very likely have a strong opinion about it. In this age of political correctness and rampant censorship, there is something thrilling about unadulterated speed, violence and sex; GUNSMITH CATS has that adrenaline-edge thrill, and does it a hell of a lot better than PULP FICTION.

I'll leave you to draw your own conclusions on the validity of the characters, while I sit back, with one hand on the wheel and one on smoking steel...

(Special thanks to John Ott and John Scharmen for research assistance)



## THE FIGHTING GALLANT GIRLS COME TO COMICS

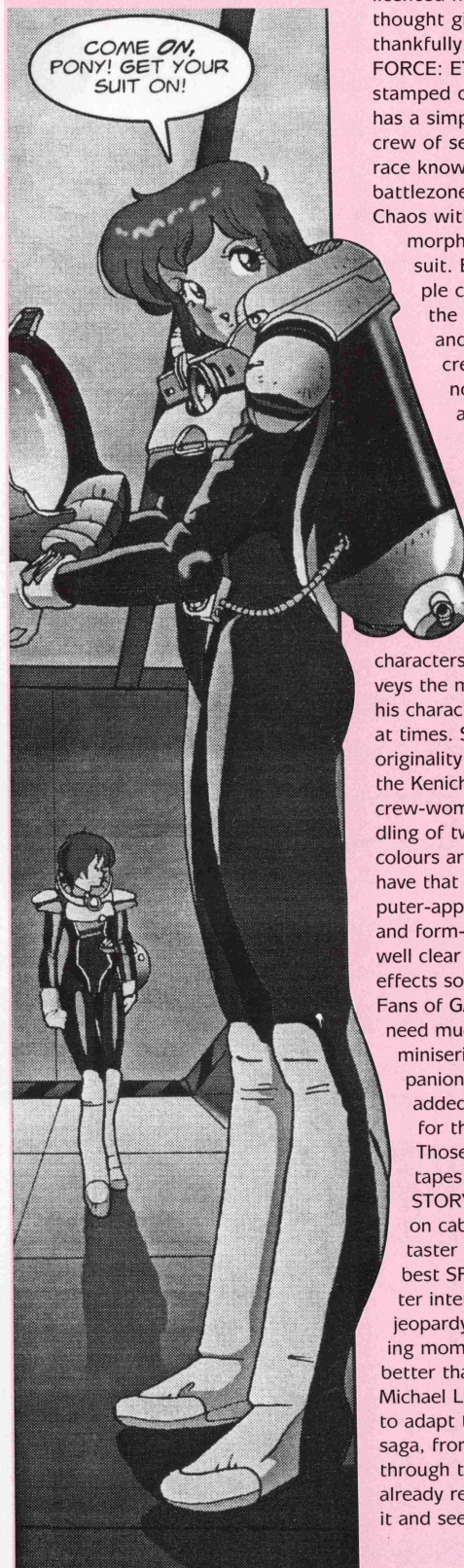
by JIM SWALLOW

Central Park Media, the driving force behind U.S. Manga Corps have teamed up with Studio Go! to bring the adventures of the GALL FORCE crew to life on paper. CPM's first release is a four-issue limited series adapting the first GALL FORCE movie, ETERNAL STORY. Written

and drawn by Bruce Lewis (known for his work on Academy's ROBOT-ECH titles) with flashy SFX and colouring by John Ott, the series distills the plotline of the anime into the comicbook medium without losing any of it's essential dynamism. Often, a comics adaptation is as cheap, low-grade venture for a publisher, guaranteed sales through the licenced name alone with little thought given to presentation - thankfully, CPM Comics' GALL FORCE: ETERNAL STORY isn't stamped out of that mould. The tale has a simple enough premise; A crew of seven from an all-women race known as the Solnoids flee a battlezone, bound for the planet Chaos with the enemy (the meta-

morphic Paranoids) in hot pursuit. But what seems like a simple course of action leads to the revelation of dark secrets and the realisation that the crew are being manipulated, not only by their foes, but also by their allies.

Lewis makes a real attempt to add something to the storyline, in the form of dialogue asides and subtle changes in scene angles. He also promises "back story" references to the unseen universe the characters come from. His art conveys the mecha and scenery well, but his characters seem a little off-kilter at times. Striking a balance between originality and accurate copying of the Kenichi Sonoda-created StarLeaf crew-women means a difficult straddling of two stools. John Ott's colours are a little dark and they have that tell-tale crispness of computer-applied tone, but they are deft and form-fitting, and the SFX steer well clear of the unconvincing sound effects some CG letterers slap on. Fans of GALL FORCE et al won't need much convincing to buy this miniseries; I didn't. It's a fine companion to the anime, and Lewis' added touches make it essential for the GALL FORCE completist. Those of you without NTSC tapes, or who missed ETERNAL STORY on it's dozen-or-so runs on cable TV, can dive in and get a taster for one of the late eighties' best SF adventures. Good character interplay, swift action, dramatic jeopardy and some genuine touching moments...It doesn't get much better than this. CPM's line editor Michael Lindsay has stated his desire to adapt the entire GALL FORCE saga, from ETERNAL STORY right through to NEW CENTURY, and I'm already reserving my copies. Go buy it and see what you're missing.





# PATLABOR

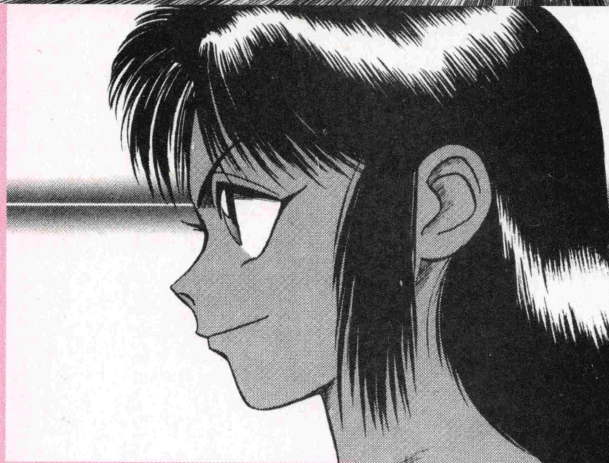


In our last issue, we told you about the genesis of PATLABOR - how various ideas were discussed and adapted over a period of years until finally Masami Yuuki and the HEAD-GEAR team arrived at the perfect mix. Their creations went on to TV, film and video fame - the film are now being released here in the UK on MANGA VIDEO - but the very first appearance of Noa & Co. was in manga form, as you see them here.

The MOBILE POLICE PATLABOR manga was serialised in SHONEN SUNDAY magazine from April 1988. Its popularity ensured that a collected edition would follow, and SHONEN SUNDAY duly obliged. The OAV

and TV stories follow the manga reasonably closely, and these pictures show events from the hugely popular 'Griffon battles' sequence, in which Utsumi, an ambitious employee of Schaft Enterprises, bends the law and his own company's rules while testing the prototype J-9 Griffon with its pre-teen pilot Bad. Eventually he goes too far even for Schaft, and the scene is set for a battle of wits between him and the Mobile Police, and a titanic hand-to-hand battle between Noa and Bad in their mighty mecha. Until a Western TV company is intelligent enough to pick up the PATLABOR TV series, you'll just have to seek out the manga for the full story!

Top left : Griffon in action  
Centre left : Griffon test pilot Badd  
Centre, l to r : Yamazaki, Shinshi, Ota, Alphonse, Izumi and Shinohara in their manga incarnation  
Top right : The Griffon in its secret hangar



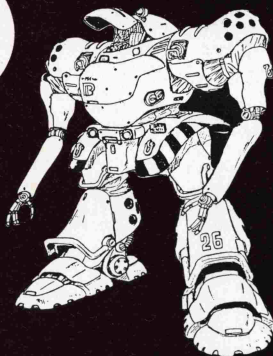
let's learn labors!



JUST A FEW OF THE MANY MECHA FROM THE PATLABOR WORLD

#### MPL96AV ASUKA

Mfg: Shinohara Heavy Industries, October 1996, height: 5.62 metres  
The first labor put into active police service, this is a very primitive machine. The cockpit has no sensors or monitoring screens and the time/response ratio of the controls is particularly poor, slower than some heavy work labors.



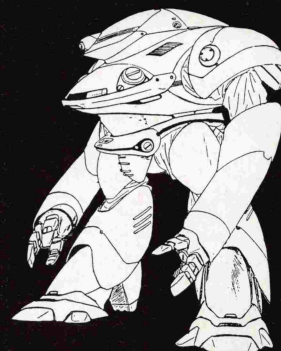
#### TYPE J-9 GRIFFON

Mfg: Schaft Enterprise Japan, date unknown, height: 8.55 m  
The ASURA system, which enables pilot and mecha to function almost as one, and the near-instantaneous time/response ratio make this elegant mecha the fastest and deadliest fighting machine around. Only one prototype exists.



#### 5G/C GRAU BEAR

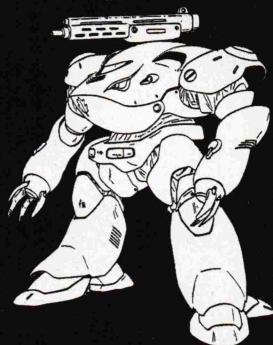
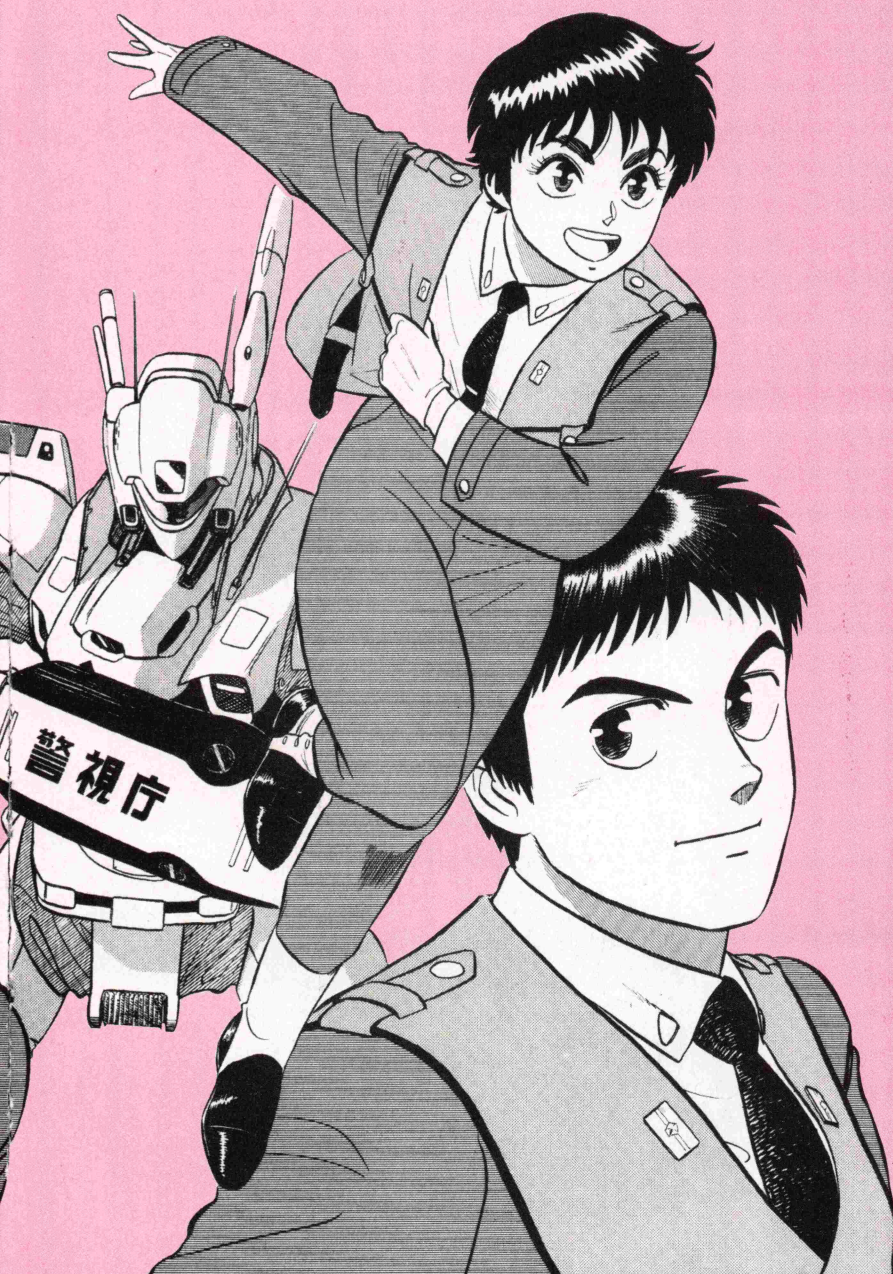
Mfg: Schaft Enterprise Europe, October 1997, height: 7.68m  
A basic military utility labor, wide, slow and clumsy, with a very high time/response ratio and poor manoeuvrability.





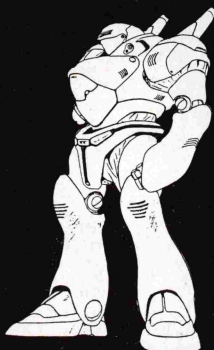
# ABOR

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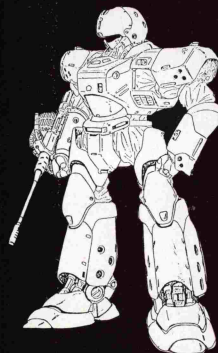
## 6Q/2C CHIMAERA

Mfg: Schaft: Enterprise Europe, late 1997, height : 7.10m  
A much more effective machine than the earlier Grau Bear, with better cockpit visibility, manoeuvrability and flexibility. Used by many thirdworld nations and those with low military budgets as an all-purpose infantry labor.



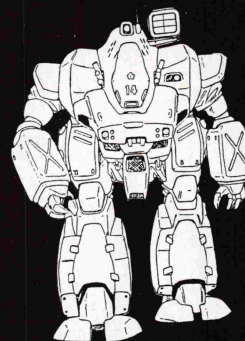
## 7B/2B BROCKEN

Mfg: Schaft Enterprise Europe, January 1998, height : 8.68 m  
Excellent tank support labor, strong and fast enough for effective hand-to-hand combat. Extensively used by German army. Sensor pods on back. Cannon can be upgraded to 105mm.



## ARL-99B HELLDIVER

Mfg: Shinohara Heavy Industries, October 1999, height : 7.95m  
Produced with the help of the Japanese Self Defence Forces, this is a flexible, well-armoured all-round machine. main gun linked to target acquisition computer. Legs have powerful shock absorbers to cope with parachute drops.



## AL-97 SAMSON

Mfg: Hiishi Heavy Industries, late 1997, height : 9.10 m  
Another J.S.D.F. co-design, this heavy-duty labor was conceived to replace conventional tanks. Two versions; the AL-97S has heavier armour and the massive tritube autocannon, further decreasing its manoeuvrability and speed.





## MOBILE POLICE PATLABOR 2 : THE MOVIE

© 1993 Headgear/Emotion/TFC

PATLABOR THE MOVIE, the first film based on this immensely popular manga/anime series, recently released in the UK on MANGA VIDEO, was very different in style and mood from the OAV and TV series. Set in the 'real' future, but still showing strong signs of creator Masami Yuki's parody-genre roots, the stories were warm and accessible and the characters endearingly endowed with human failings in plenty. The realism was there - funds short, politicians shifty and unreliable, urban living a nightmare of traffic jams and inadequate infrastructure - but the mood was, for the most part, upbeat and sunny, with moments of humour or even sheer insanity to lighten the strains and tensions of dealing with crime Tokyo-1998 style.

The first movie, however, signalled a change of pace and tone. even its colour palette was colder, greyer and bleaker than that of the OAVs and TV series; the situation on the Babylon Project was both conceivable and very dangerous, and with present-day concerns about terrorist action and individual obsession could all too easily be imagined in our own world. The second movie

carries this development to even greater realism a stage further. The story is almost frighteningly believable, and the music of Kenji Kawai, the chara designs and backgrounds are somehow harder and colder, building a truly convincing atmosphere of tension and danger. Shoji Kawamori of MACROSS fame and Hajime Katoki, designer on GUNDAM 0083, V-GUNDAM and GUNDAM SENTINEL, contributed to the design team building this compellingly realistic, if bleak, world, and their combined efforts have produced a convincing setting for the story.

Mechafreaks may be disappointed, and if this seems impossible for a PATLABOR title, consider that Yutaka Izubuchi's stunning mecha designs are hardly seen except for a few moments at the beginning and end of the film. Character development is very strong; the changes that have taken place in our original happy-go-lucky team in the four years since 1998 are considerable.

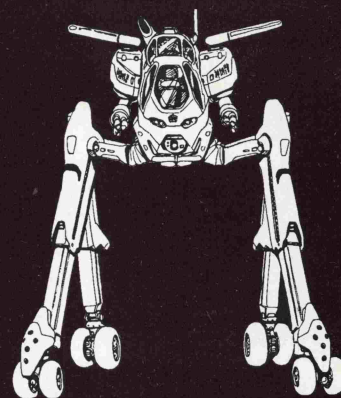
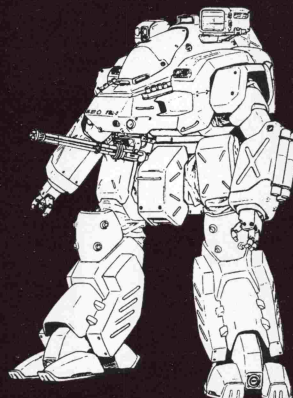
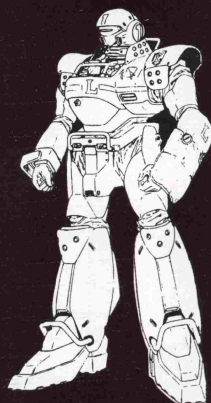
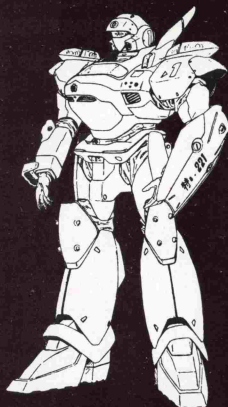
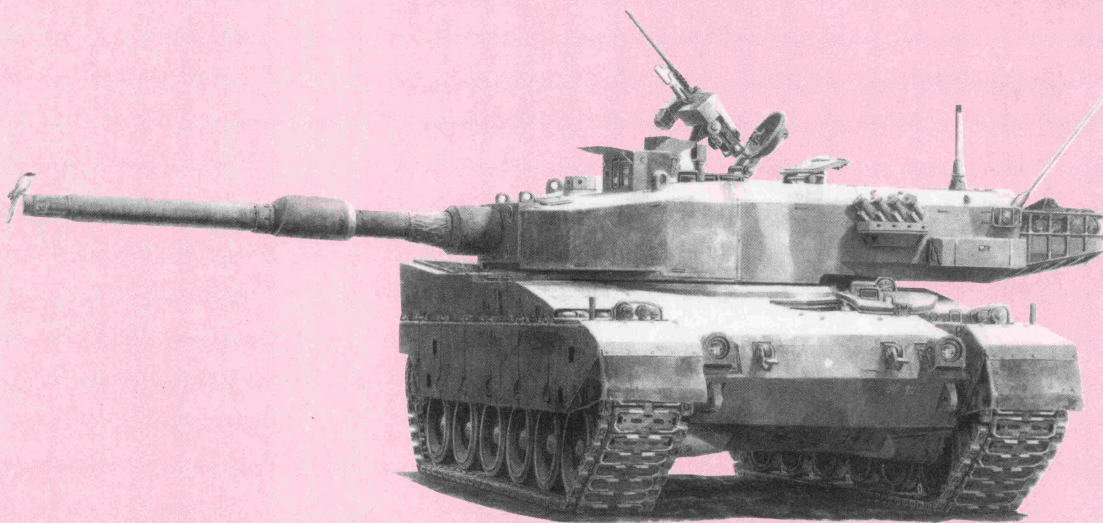
Noa Izumi and Asuma Shinohara have left the police force and gone to work for Shinohara Heavy Industries as labor control software

developers. Despite Asuma's disagreements with his father on so many issues, it appears as if he is now on track to replace Shinohara senior at the helm of the company. Mikiyasu Shinshi has also left SVD and he and his wife now have a child. His old 'forward' Isao Ohta has become an instructor at the force's Labor Training School, and is still as fiery and aggressive as ever. Gentle giant Hiromi Yamazaki is also still with the Force and acts as gardener/caretaker for Section 2's base. Shigeo Shiba is still onbase too, having replaced the retired and recently-widowed 'mecha god' Seitaro Sakaki. Meanwhile the chiefs of Sections One and Two, Shinobu Nagumo and Kiichi Goto, seem unchanged. Shinobu is even more poised, cool and brilliant; she has become a renowned authority on labor-related crime and combines her police duties with a growing number of lecturing engagements. Goto is still one of the sharpest cops on the force, still conceals his razor-brain under an air of almost somnolent calm, and still has the hots for Shinobu.

But there's a problem. One of Shinobu's former teachers, Yukihito

Tsuge, is a man with a grudge, and radical elements in the Japanese Self-Defense Forces have finally given him the means to avenge it. In 1999 the UN Labor unit he commanded took a beating against guerrilla troops; he was the sole survivor and vowed vengeance on the weak Japanese government. Now retired, he has spent the years since then preparing a coup d'etat. Government official Shigeki Arakawa is helping him, and were it not for the fact that Goto's suspicions are aroused by Arakawa during an incident investigation, the plot might have gone unsuspected. Helped by his friend Inspector Matsui, Goto finds enough to confirm his suspicions and, just as he did in PATLABOR THE MOVIE, decides to take things into his own hands. But Shinobu, with her close relationship with Tsuge, is the best person to lead the commando infiltration team, even though her career and her life will be on the line ... and Goto's old team reunites to fight this new danger.

*Last issue there was a mistake in our PATLABOR feature on pages 34-35: the two mecha schematics for the Ingrams were accidentally switched at the printer! So please note - the captions should be swapped over.*



### AV-02 INGRAM

Mfg: Shinohara Heavy Industries, 2002. The latest elite police labor, successor to the AV-98. Has the updated HOS 0.98 'Beta' operating system based on that used in the prototype XO02; a smaller, more efficient power source makes it lighter and faster. Gun compartment now on left of torso. Note change in head configuration.

### TRAINER LABOR LEHRER

A simplified version of the AV-02, chosen for its ease of maintenance and simpler controls, the Lehrer is used in police labor training. It lacks both the range of sensor equipment and the HOS System of the Ingram but is very manoeuvrable and stable. The pilot's chair is on a retractable mount and the hatch is in the back, not the chest.

### TYPE 97 HANNIBAL

A heavily armed and equipped battle-tank labor wholly unsuited for fast-moving guerrilla combat, this 'heavy weapon' is used by the JSDF and the UN peacekeeping Force.

### TYPE 99 ROADRUNNER

Used for traffic control by the Tokyo Highway patrol, its arms and legs will extend from its basic 'car' mode, allowing it to literally ride over other vehicles and manipulate objects.



# PATLABOR 2





Justice is traditionally blind, but it took Go Nagai to suggest that she should be naked too. As EAST2WEST FILMS brings his masked superheroine to Britain, **HELEN MCCARTHY** asks: are we ready for some dangerous fun?

There's a curious, yet fundamental innocence about the works of Go Nagai. In all his writing evil arises from greed, dishonesty and cruelty; there is nothing wrong with the simple pleasures of life, like sex, until evil perverts and exploits them; and the established social order is far more likely to be threatened by those who seek to manipulate others for their own ends than those who like to get their kit off and have fun with other consenting partners - or otherwise get on with their lives without interfering in the affairs of others. His work is remarkably free from pomposity or preaching, and all the cruelty and misery in his epic horror fantasies arise from the fatal flaws of characters or organisations who are bent on domination and control.

It's natural, then, that he should create a heroine like Kekko Kamen and a show that pokes fun at traditional superheroes, angst-ridden high-school stories, exam hell, right-wing politics, overstuffed body-builders and lecherous old men in the jolliest and least subtle of fashions. Everything at Sparta College is over the top. The staff are all pathetic misfits who have found their niche in a place where their psychoses constitute essential job skills, the pupils are for the most part faceless, spineless ciphers anxious only not to be noticed, and the victim Mayumi is as hapless as anyone could wish - her main fear while stripped and under torture is that this kind of exposure means she'll never get anyone to marry her. Meanwhile the mysterious masked heroine, the Messenger of Love and Justice, who has realized that one of the best ways to make sure nobody

ever knows her identity is to see to it that the last thing they'll look at is her face, is a high-kicking, nun-chakowielding beauty with a thigh-grip that leaves her victims dazed but eternally grateful - from one

point of view,

the apotheosis of sexist exploitation (which is why we wouldn't let our wellknown radical feminist Julia Sertori write this article); from another, the perfect creation of someone who knows that

the best way to stop people getting hysterical about sex is not to take any of its manifestations too seriously.

By making explicit many of the hidden assumptions in other anime, **KEKKO KAMEN** defuses them, turning them from dark secrets into enormous belly-laughs. How much of Sparta College can be found in the Japanese education system is a matter for speculation. It's interesting to compare this release with Western Connection's **SLOW STEP**, also set in a Japanese high school but with a very different agenda. Obviously **SLOW STEP** lacks the midnight exam, the torture chamber and the P.E. teacher with the body of Schwarzenegger; but the staff's treatment of their students can be cavalier or downright objectionable, the students themselves are for the most part reluctant either to help someone so conspicuously in need as Sawamura or to speak out against her anti-social behaviour (and that of the teachers), and the main concern of the heroine is marriage. There again, some of the career-women in anime aren't exactly ideal role models. The

horny and deranged Professor of Music in **ADVENTURE DUO 3** ends up in bondage gear begging one of her teenage students for 'assistance'; Fraulein Tapoko, the new teacher at Sparta College, is a bondage queen run mad, the imagery of the Third Reich inextricably mixed with the 'S & M' logo adorning her shirt.

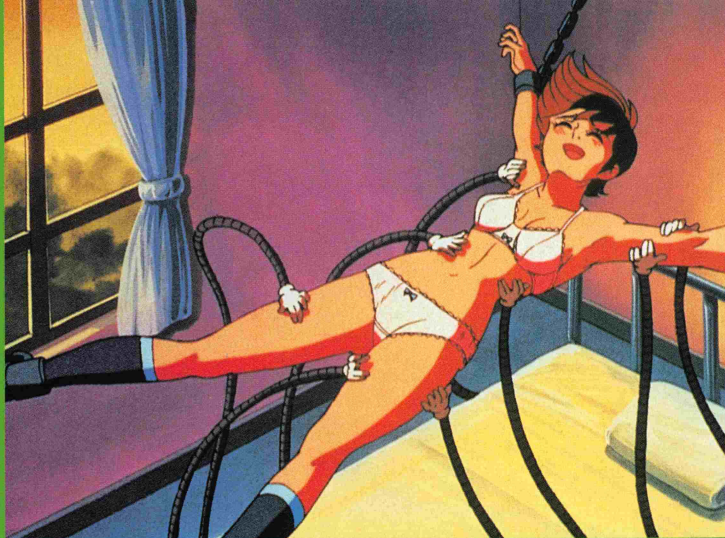
But, while **KEKKO KAMEN** is undoubtedly capable of deeper interpretation, it doesn't need it. This kind of humour is its own explanation and its own justification. It's rude, crude and completely tasteless, and there isn't a harmful or malicious part in its completely and shamelessly exposed anatomy. Its unique selling point is, quite sim-



# KEKKO KAMEN

## 怪獣仮面





ply, that it's over the top enough to make almost anyone laugh - well, OK, probably not David Alton - and that should be all the justification this demented Japanese version of a seaside postcard needs.

## THE CHARACTERS

**KEKKO KAMEN** - the Messenger of Love and Justice, masked but naked; heaven only knows where she keeps her nunchakus. Nobody knows her identity but she can be relied on to turn up to save the hapless Mayumi from the teachers whenever necessary. She's not without weaknesses, however, and she's certainly no manhater, as is proved by her reaction to the gorgeous

frame of the gym teacher and the great kindness with which she sometimes thigh-clamps Principal Tochiz' head.

**MAYUMI TAKAHASHI** - a wimp of the first order whose main function in life seems to be to provide those with an urge to torture someone with a suitable subject. Well, how many teenage girls do YOU know who can't keep awake after midnight? She also has the most fragile clothing known to humankind.

**CHIGUSA YUKA** - a quiet, straight-A student who acts as narrator. In a traditional school story she'd be Mayumi's sempai, an older mentor/friend; however, although

she does stand up for Mayumi, and also helps out Kekko Kamen on one occasion, she seems a bit of a loner.

**SATAN TOCHIZ** The Principal of Sparta College, and completely insane. Also wears a mask, like his arch-nemesis Kekko Kamen. The translated script suggests that we think 'Homer Simpson meets Adolf Hitler', which sums him up to perfection.

**PROFESSOR BEN** Terrified of infections, as well he might be, a pathetic inadequate whose hero is Principal Tochiz and who has an intimate knowledge of the panties of every girl in the school.

**TAPOKO** A young teacher transferred from Auschwitz College with a strong interest in P.E. (Punishment Education). Guest sadist in Part 1.

**MUSCLES** Real name Taro Schwarzenegger; an overdeveloped hunk with a high opinion of his own pulling power, also a P.E. specialist. Part 2's guest sadist.

## SYNOPSIS

**PART 1** - Tapoko arrives at Sparta College and is immediately offered the chance to improve the education of a student who fell asleep during the midnight exam - it's Mayumi, of

course. Kekko Kamen leaps from on high to save the day, and everyone wonders who the mysterious masked girl is. At first Mayumi thinks it might be Chigusa Yuka, and when Professor Ben finds a pair of Chigusa's knickers he leaps to the same conclusion. However when Chigusa intervenes to try and save Mayumi she herself is threatened, and Kekko Kamen turns up to save them both and turn the tables on queen-bitch Tapoko.

**PART 2** - Tochiz brings up the big guns in the form of the most gorgeous hunk in the known universe, or at least in Sparta College. His technique is to lull the girls into a false sense of security with sweet words, then torture them mercilessly. On the principle that 'no woman can resist a man with a beautiful body', Tochiz hopes that Muscles will defeat Kekko Kamen, and at first it seems to be working; then Chigusa steps in and gives the masked heroine a new secret weapon - the Ribbon of Love and Justice. Good triumphs over evil, and the episode ends with a song - written by Go Nagai himself - which perfectly sums up the message of **KEKKO KAMEN**.

There's a third episode which will be released next month. Don't miss the epic conclusion of the battle between the Angel of Justice and the perverts of Sparta College!





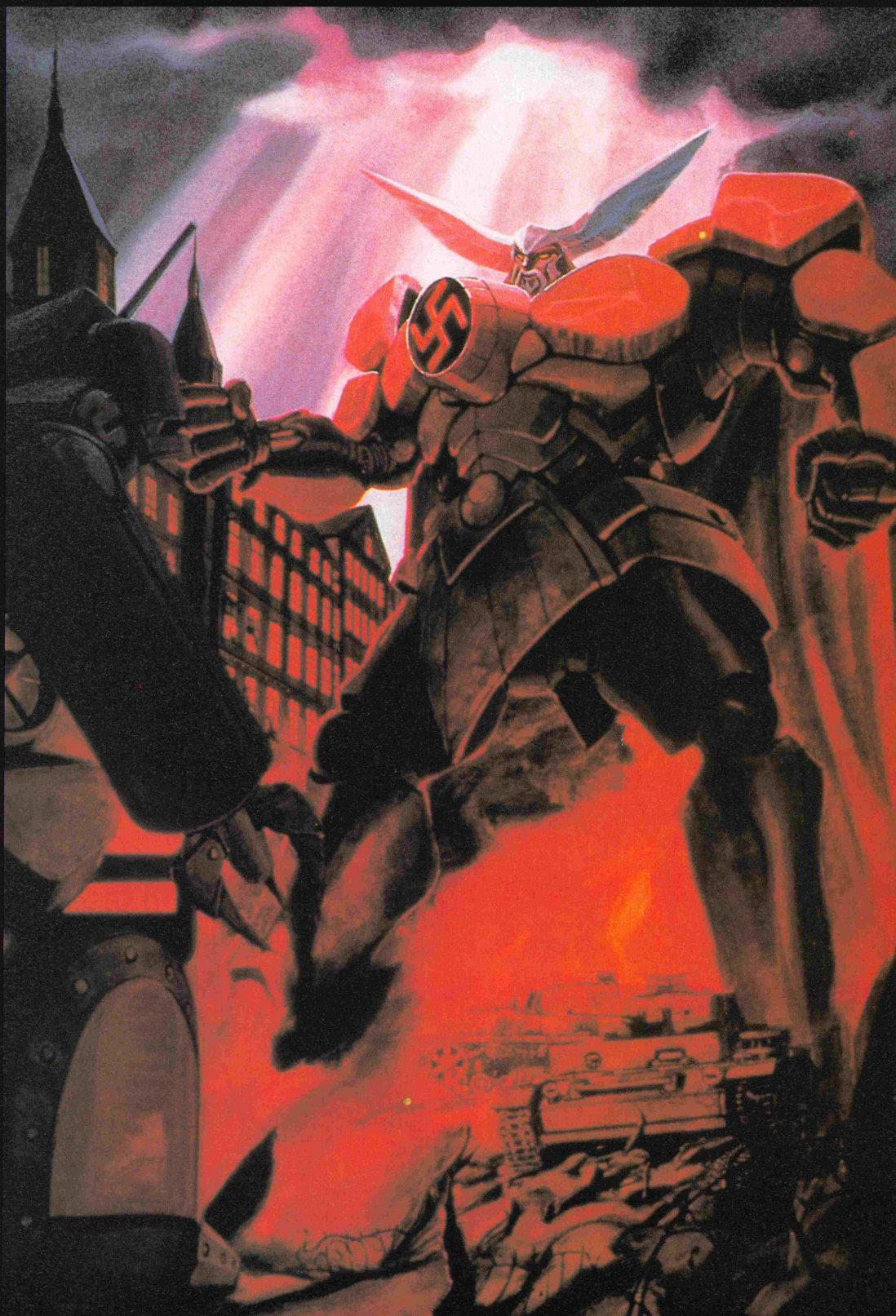
The latest release from Pioneer echoes this year's anniversaries with its 'back to the forties' styling and good old adventure-yarn structure. **HELEN MCCARTHY** looks at **KISHIN TROOPS**.

Everyone who ever read a UFO-sighting story knows that all sorts of people have been meeting alien visitors since far back in Earth's history. Until now, however, not much has been made of their role in the Pacific War. The plot of *KISHIN HEIDAN* revolves around a daring revision of history. On the 13th of August 1937 the Japanese Marines' Shanghai Special Expeditionary Force came under fierce attack by extra-terrestrial forces using non-conventional weaponry. The aliens could absorb both matter and energy and were only beaten off with terrible losses on the human side. A few enemy bodies were recovered for analysis and it was found that they were no more than sophisticated robots, with technology that could be analysed - and cannibalised - by Earth's engineers to create defensive weaponry. Despite the growing tensions that erupted into world war, an international team of scientists came together to create a defence against further aggression by the aliens, and the *KISHIN CORPS* was formed. Over the next four years the alien technology was explored; it couldn't be properly understood or duplicated but some elements, mainly the control mechanisms, could be used. By 1941 - the story's 'present day' the uses are growing increasingly sophisticated.

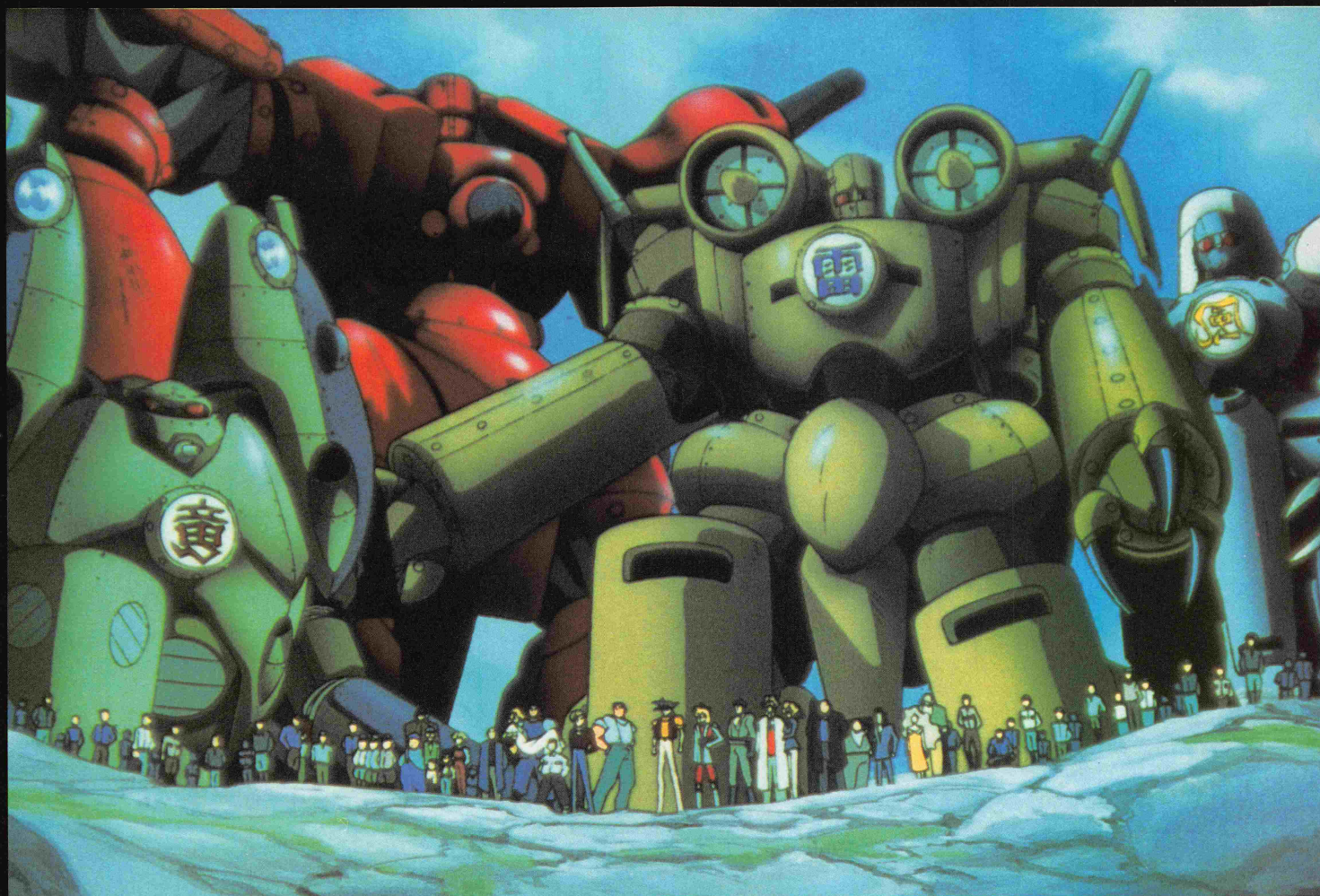
However, not everyone wants the alien technology for the purpose of defending the Earth. Although the Kishin Corps was founded purely for defence against the aliens, not for international combat, some seek to use the weapons for their own ends. Colonel Shinkai of Japan's Kanto Army is after the alien control devices to build weaponry of his own. He plans to dominate the whole of South-East Asia, and is working in collusion with the Nazis; however his allies are even more evil than he is, and as this alternate history evolves the world comes once again to the brink of destruction.

The Kishin Corps scientists have developed huge robots, using the control modules recovered from alien remains to drive massive behemoths of steel controlled by valves, gears and levers. The designs evolved by Takeshi Yamazaki and Koji Watanabe for the series are masterpieces, the ultimate flowering of the 'retro'

# HEAVY METAL *history*







trend in anime style; internally and externally they are completely credible as machines, with the movements of their mighty mechanisms lovingly portrayed as they crank into action. In plotting each scene as well as in the overall feel of the story, director Takaaki Ishiyama has aimed for a sense of scale, mass, and dynamic movement, harking back to his own love of such early shows as *TETSUJIN 28-GO (IRONMAN 28/GIGANTOR)* and *GATCHAMAN*. As for the characters, visualised by animation director Masayuki Goto of *GUN-DAM F91*, they too have caught the Forties style, stepping straight from the flickering screens of a black and white movie - the elegant, mysterious woman who could be good or evil, the bitch-queen in military tailoring, the absent-minded scientist, the cool, self-contained charm of the daredevil hero, the sweetness of the pure-hearted heroine, the well-meaning hulk with a heart as big as his muscles, the spunky orphan kid, the demonic elegance of the evil mastermind. In *KISHIN TROOPS* Ishiyama has created a Saturday matinee treat, an adventure story that isn't ashamed to acknowledge the old-fashioned values of storytelling, character and visual style.

### THE STORY

The story is based on a series of novels by Masaki Yamada, and the title literally translates as *MACHINE GOD CORPS*. As well as featuring events which roughly correspond to some points of our history, it also features a few real-life characters - watch out for Hitler's mistress Eva Braun and scientific genius Albert Einstein, although the roles they play in this universe are very different from their part in our own history.

1941 : Taishi Takamura's parents are killed by the Kanto Army on a train travelling through Manchuria. Only the intervention of the Kishin Corps' own iron horse, the mighty Kishin Express, saves him from both the Army and the aliens. Taking the alien control mechanism with which his father has entrusted him, Taishi hides out with a gang of orphan kids, but before he can make contact with the man his father told him to find, German scientist Eva Braun arrives on the scene hunting the medal with Colonel Shinkai's forces. Her saintly identical twin sister Maria, who nursed Taishi in hospital, has already made contact with him - and the medal - for the Kishin Corps. The Corps, particularly the kindly Daisuke, take Taishi under their wing but he doesn't understand what's going on and his

anger at his parents' death and hot-headed approach to many situations causes problems for him and for his newfound friends.

It takes Taishi three episodes to work out the difference between the twins, by which time the confusion is deepened even further by our dawning awareness that not everybody thinks Eva is irretrievably on the side of the bad guys - top Kishin scientist thinks she's pretty cool, despite her willingness to work with anyone, however evil, to further her research. The Kishin Corps is racing against time to prevent the Axis powers further developing their own anti-Kishin machines, stealing a fourth

Machine God developed by Eva Braun for the Kanto Army to add to their existing force of three in the course of the story. But events in the world are conspiring against them. The American president Franklin Roosevelt dies, and without his restraining influence the USA has decided to drop a new kind of bomb - the hydrogen bomb - on Japan. The B-29 carrying the 'Glamour Girl', as the device has been codenamed, has to be stopped, but is there time to fight the aliens, and the Nazis, and stop the bomb too?

*Left: the Nazi Kishin - Panzer Kavalier  
Above: the human cast, dwarfed by the Kishin Corps*



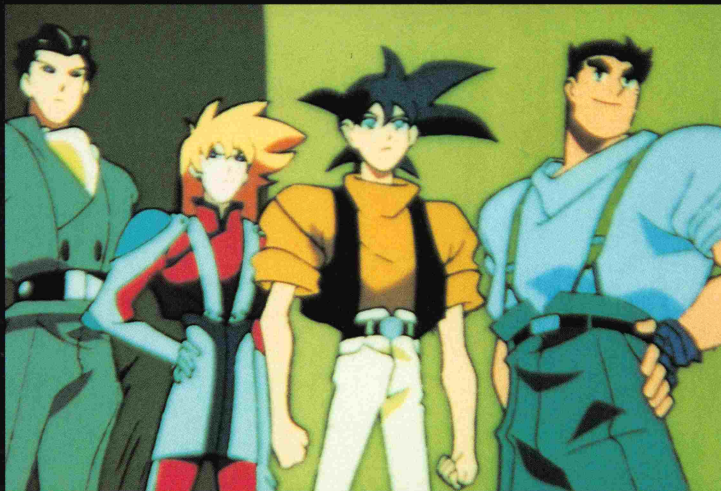


## THE MAIN CHARACTERS

**TAISHI TAKAMURA** - orphaned by the Kanto Army, he joins the Kishin Corps when he tries to fulfil his father's last wish to deliver an alien control mechanism to them. A brave and loyal boy, he's sometimes inclined to be careless and act without thought, but he becomes a valued member of the team and eventually pilots the newest Kishin, RIKUSEN-YONSHIKI, stolen from the Japanese army.

**DAISUKE SAKAKI** - Taishi's friend, an ex-marine and sumo champion who pilots the RYU-JIN (KISHIN DRAGON) heavy amphibian mecha.

**BALLIEHO** - a lithe and daring ex-



bandit queen and a crack shot, she pilots the RAI-JIN (KISHIN THUNDER).

**KIMIHIKO MASUMI** - son of a Count, a daredevil flying ace who pilots the FU-JIN (KISHIN WIND)

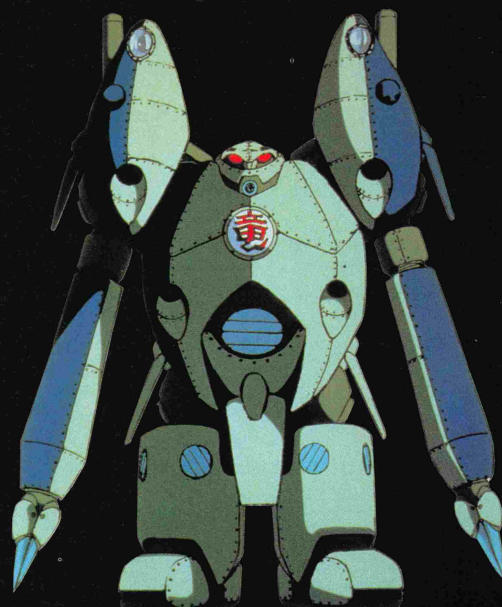
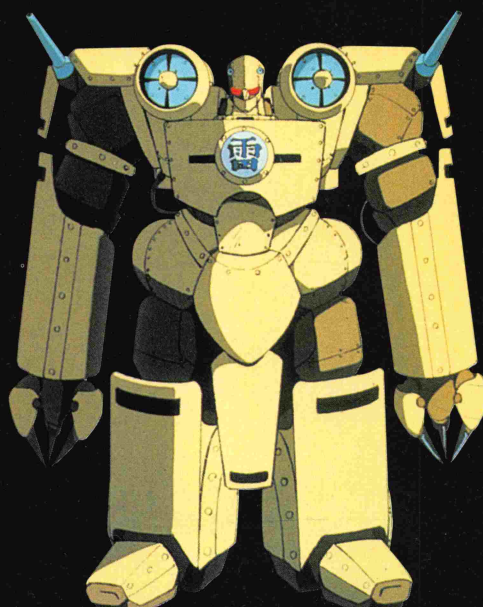
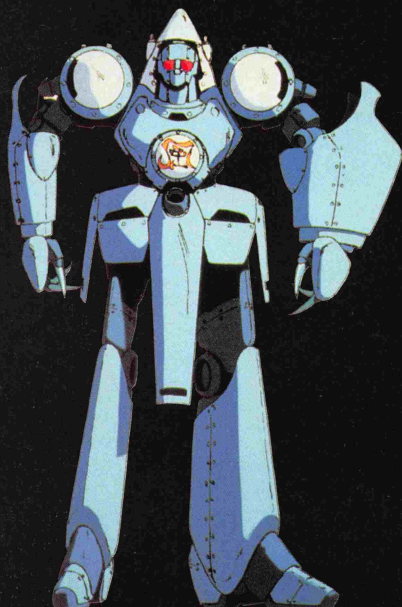
**COLONEL SHINKAI** - evil master of the Kanto Army and would-be overlord of Asia, he allies himself with the Nazis to gain power.

**HANS** - Vicious Nazi officer who takes pleasure in his work.

**MARIA and EVA BRAUN** - twin sisters who could hardly be more different, though identical; Maria is a nurse, dedicated to stopping the war as well as healing the sick; Eva is a scientist who thinks the pursuit of knowledge justifies any actions, no matter how wicked.

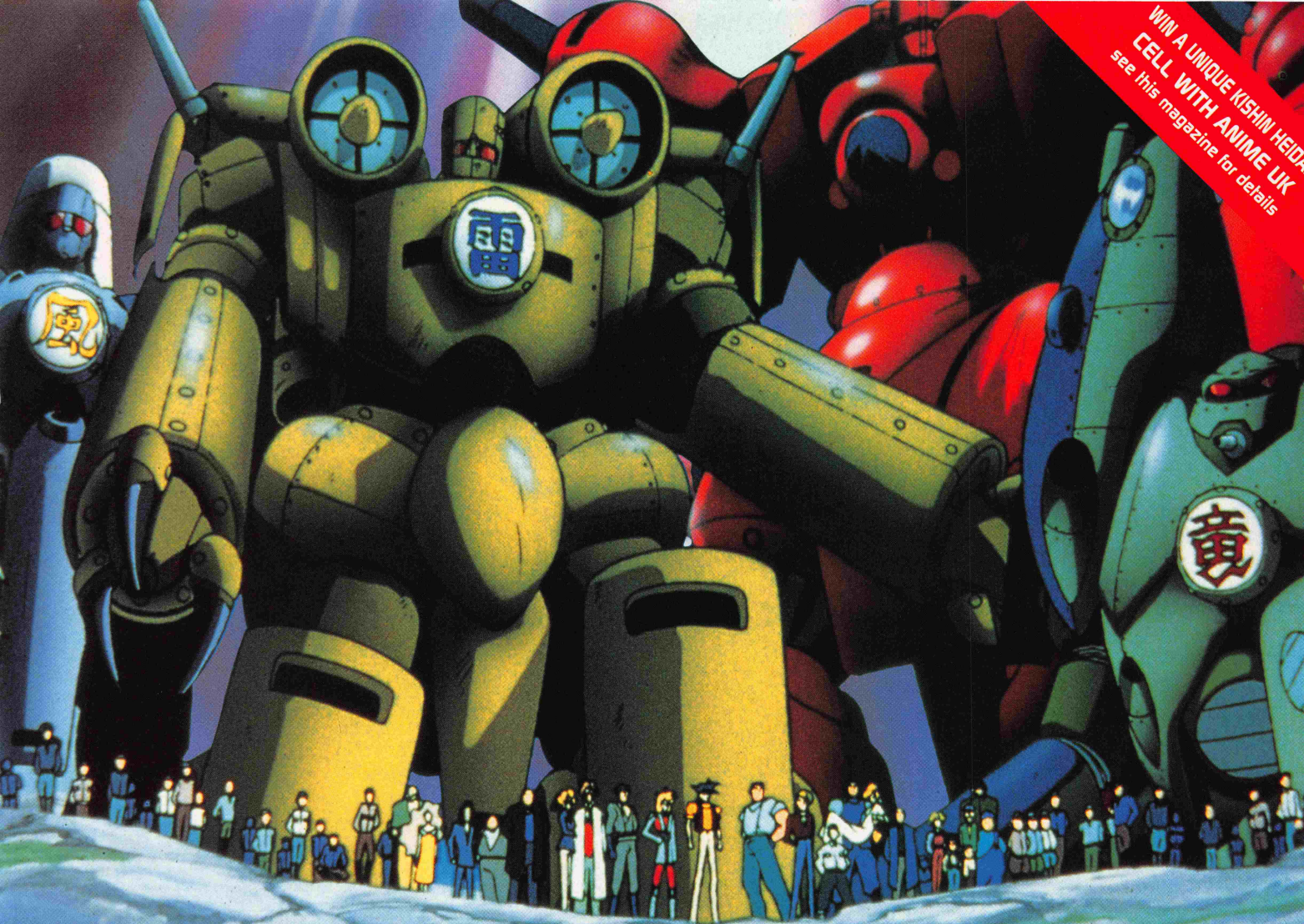


Top (left to right): Kimihiko, Ballieho, Taishi and Daisaku  
Centre left: the Rikusen-Yonshiki  
Centre right: action, hand to hand  
Bottom (left to right): Kishin Wind, Thunder and Dragon





WIN A UNIQUE KISHIN HEIDAN  
CELL WITH ANIME UK  
see this magazine for details



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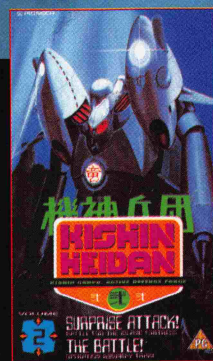
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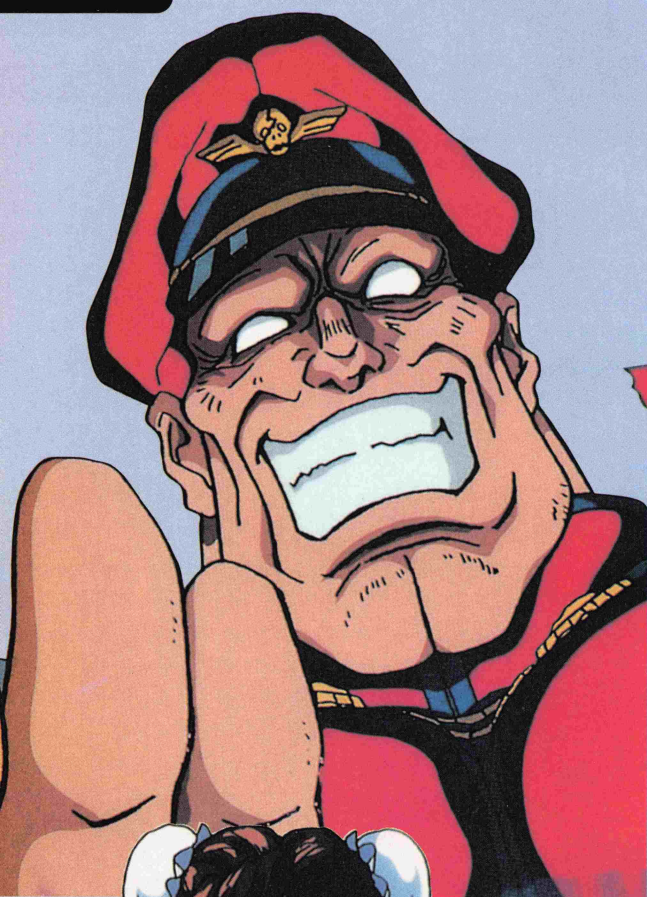
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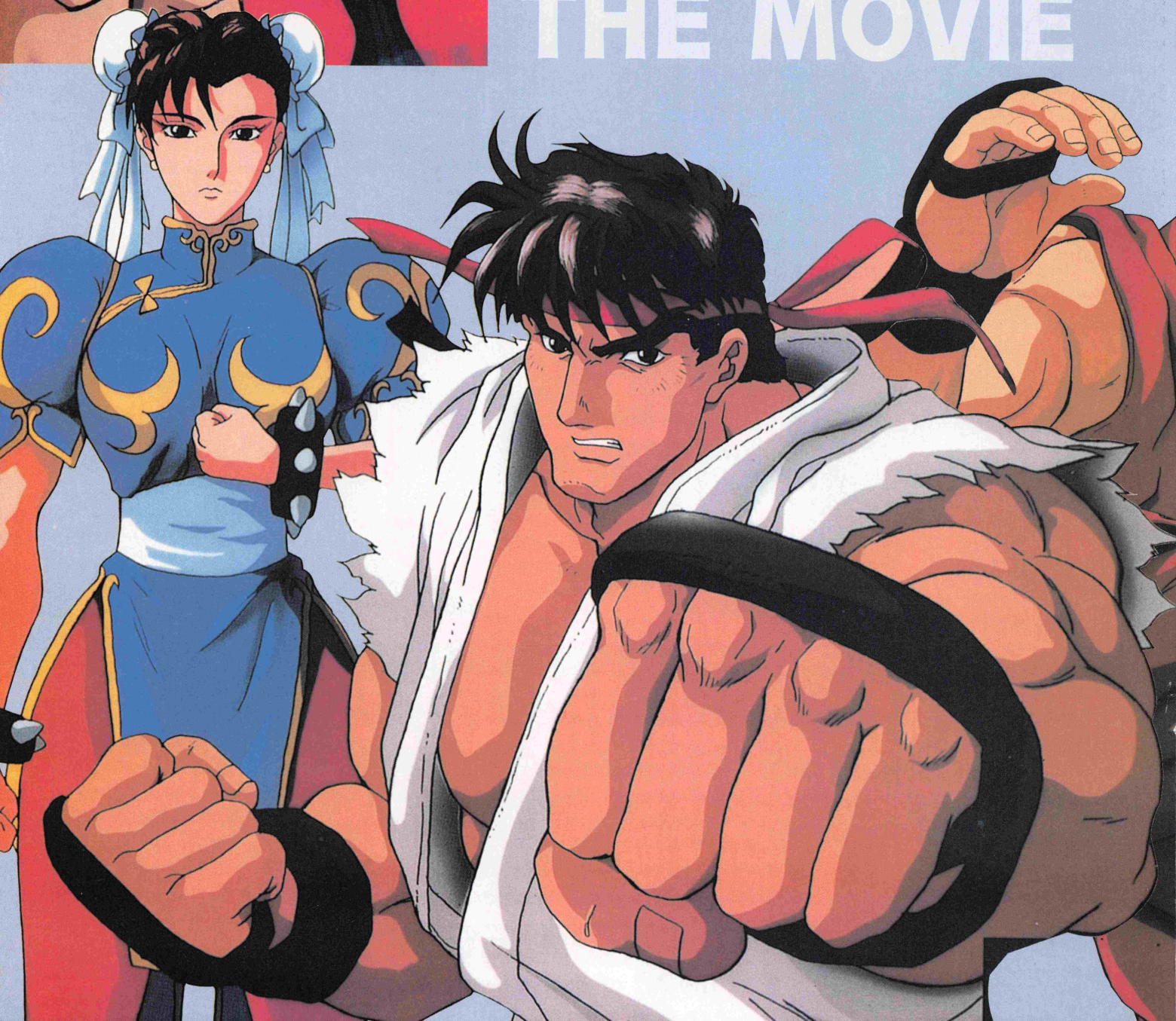
RELEASED MAY 22





# STREET FIGHTER

THE MOVIE



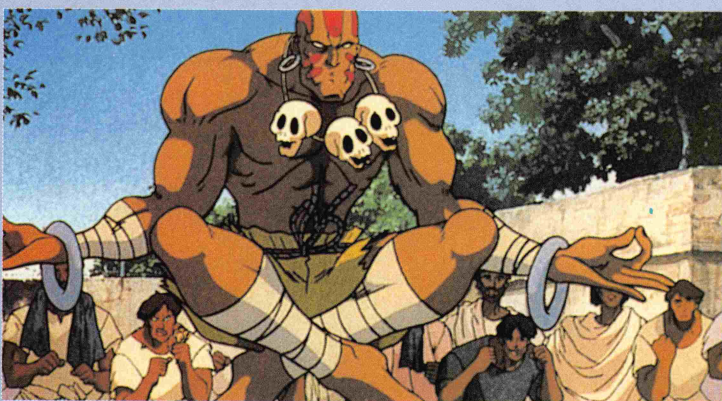
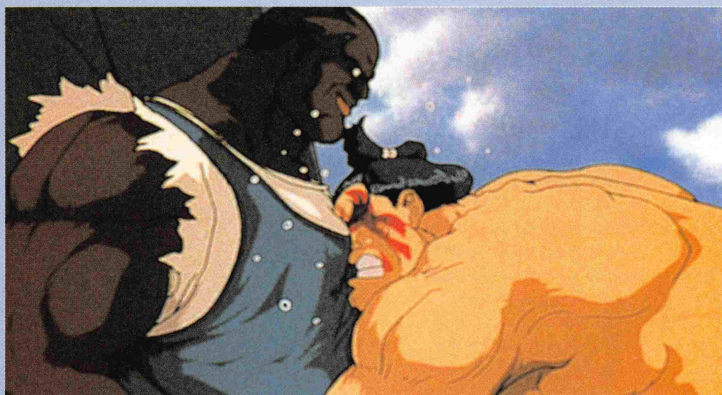
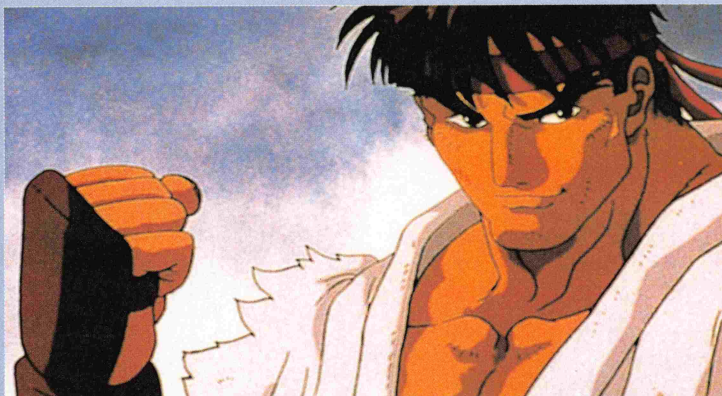


©CAPCOM



**STREET FIGHTER II IS A PHENOMENON.** Grown from an arcade game to a console game to yet more console games - creators **CAPCOM** can be accused with justice of being a one-product house - it has expanded into every kind of merchandise, a live action movie starring the unlikely pairing of JeanClaude Van Damme and Kylie Minogue, an animated film and now its own TV series. **HELEN MCCARTHY** takes a look at the anime and some of the related spinoffs, with the help of translations by **JONATHAN CLEMENTS** and **YOURI FOSTER**.





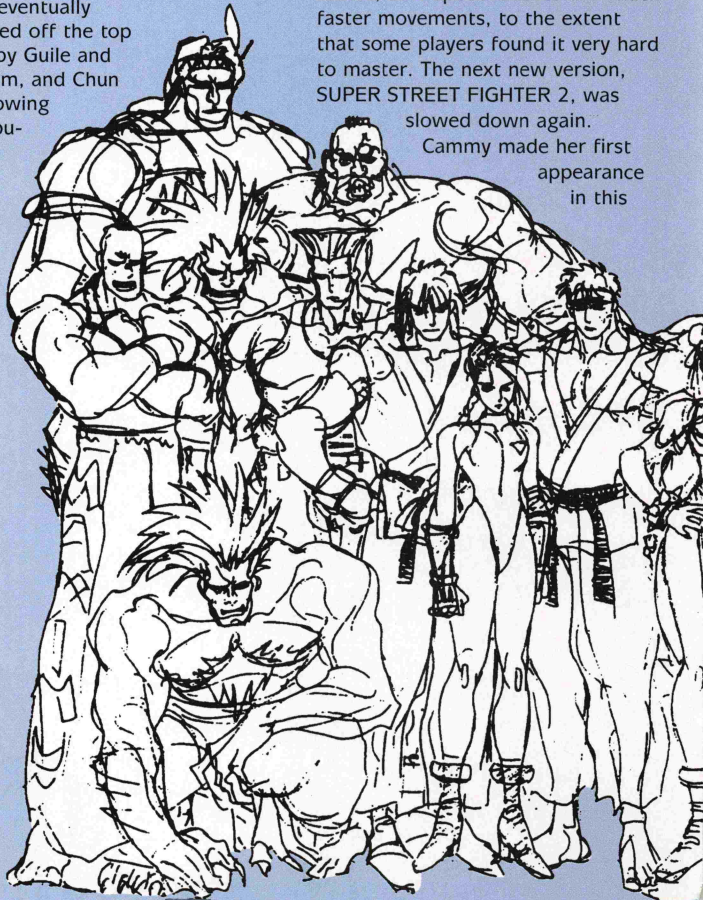
## SFII: GAME HISTORY IN JAPAN

August 1987 ... STREET FIGHTER caused an arcade revolution. Its main attraction was a series of three special attack moves, driven not by the joystick but by special buttons. And the buttons were sensitive enough to determine the power of an attack by the degree of physical pressure exerted on them by the player - so personal physical power played a part in the game too. Most people had never played a fight game requiring them to control a joystick and buttons simultaneously, but the increased excitement and flexibility of this fight mode soon had them hooked. The number of buttons increased from three to six and the buzz over the 'secret attacks' grew, but it was another four years before STREET FIGHTER II appeared in March 1991. The new version had more characters (8), better sound and graphics, and another mode - two-player battles; instead of pitting yourself against the computer you could now play against a friend. Ryu and Ken, the two initial champions, were eventually knocked off the top slots by Guile and Dhalsim, and Chun Li, growing in popularity,

also had some formidable tactics. The game was still at its peak when news of the new SF2 DASH began to leak out.

DASH had some interesting innovations - characters' strengths had been changed, moves added and deleted (Chun Li in particular becoming much weaker and therefore less popular in the arcades), and there was also the opportunity to play a character against him or herself. The four new characters - BALROG, BISON, SAGAT and VEGA (see note 'NAME CHANGES', below) - quickly established their popularity although Bison and Balrog were weaker than in the demo and needed more skill from their players. Arcade machines could now link up, so that instead of playing 2 players on one machine, 'remote' battles were now possible. But with the huge popularity of the game, piracy became a real problem, and to counter it, yet another new version, SF2 DASH TURBO, was introduced in December 1992. It had more colour, new special moves and much faster movements, to the extent that some players found it very hard to master. The next new version, SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2, was slowed down again.

Cammy made her first appearance in this





version, in September 1993, along with T. Hawk, DJ and Fei Long. A whole battery of new effects, new backgrounds, new victory poses, new music, new voices and the possibility of choosing your character's colour scheme from eight different ones were all introduced to add interest and foil the pirates for a little longer, but by March 1994 the innovation-hungry market was looking for something new, and SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2X was it, with 3-level game speed, two extra chara colour choices and a handicap option, new SUPER COMBO moves and new defensive counters. A secret character, Goki, was also included in the Las Vegas stage for those who reached a certain standard.

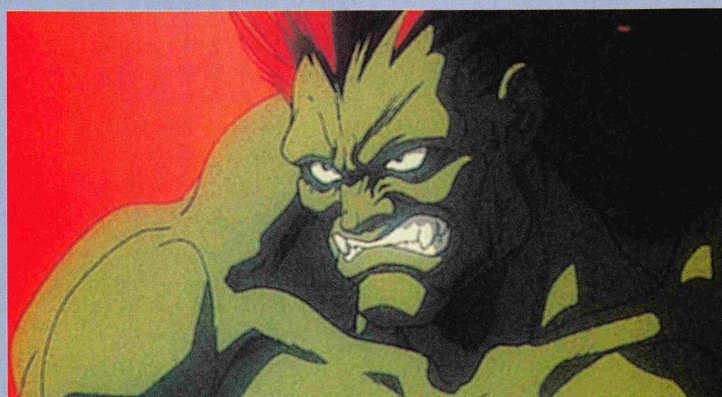
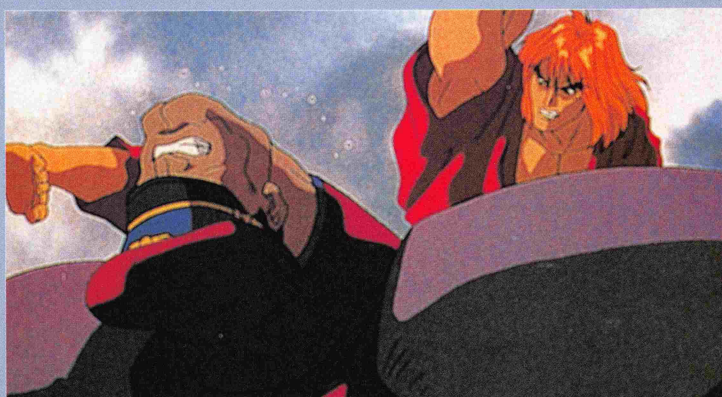
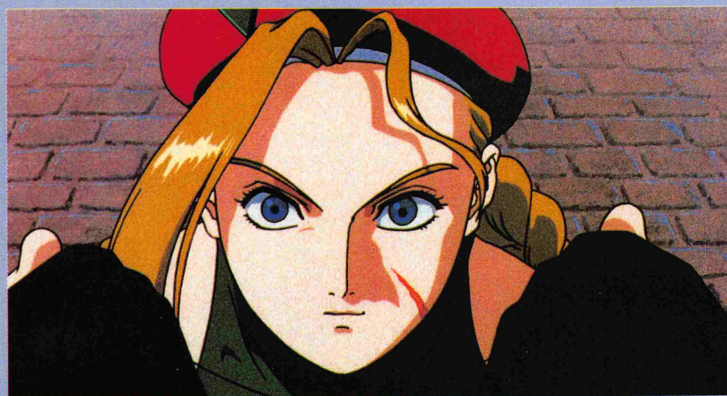
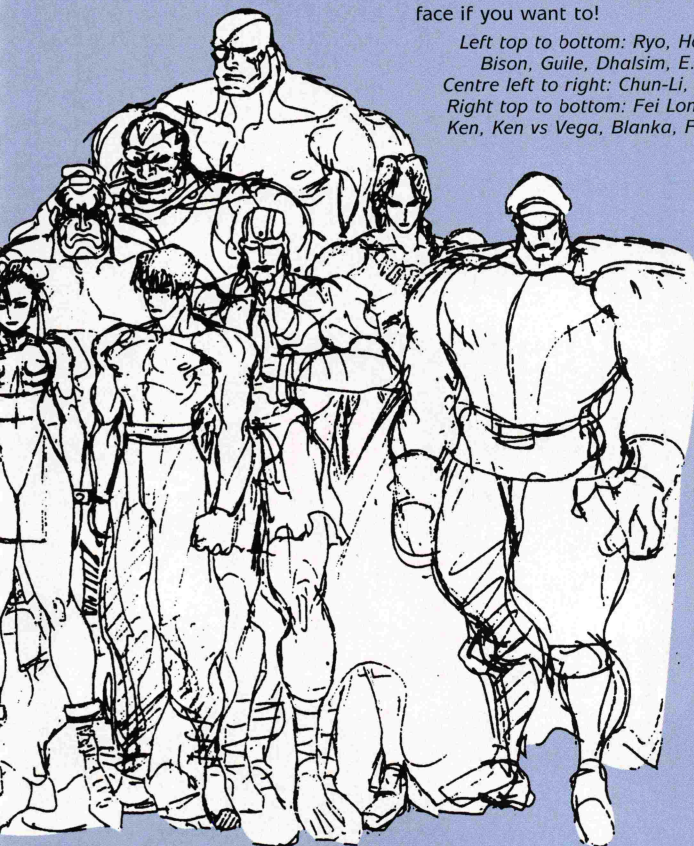
CAPCOM are turning to the ST2 TV series for their next game inspiration. They may well be a one-product house but that one product has gone a long way, from arcade and PC to live action, film and TV animation, music, comics, toys and merchandise galore.

#### SFII NAME CHANGES

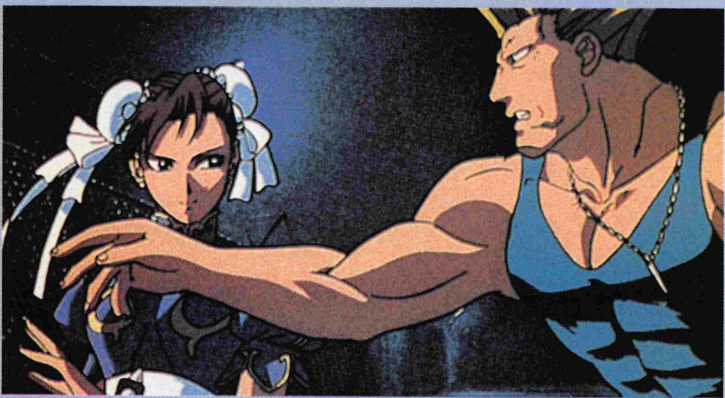
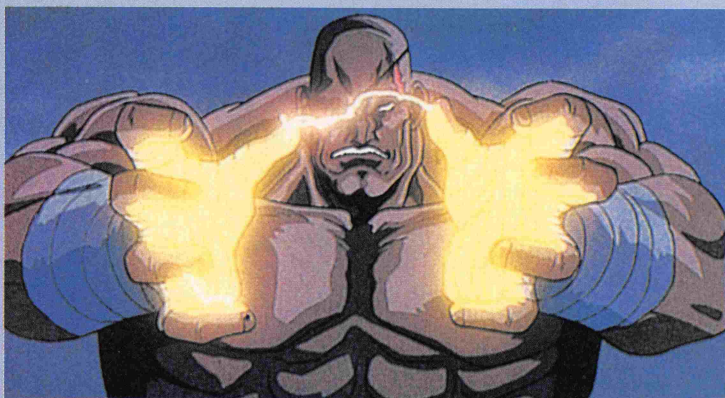
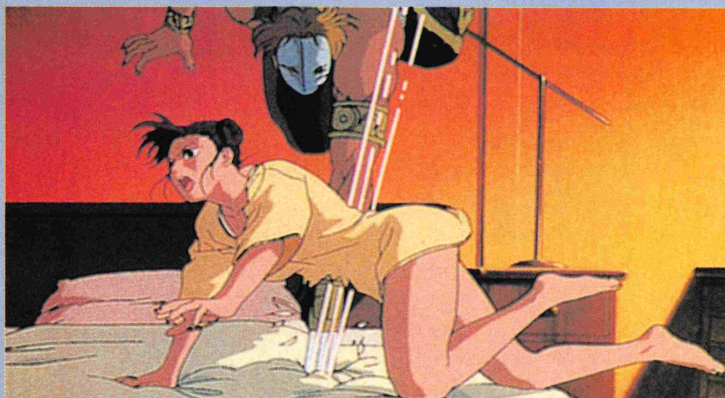
The US/English language version of the game has some character name swaps that have been transferred through to the live action movie and will probably also be made in the English dub of the anime, to keep continuity for English-speaking fans. It started with M(ike) BISON, the big black fighter whose name was just too similar to a certain famous American heavyweight boxer for comfort. He was renamed BALROG. Perhaps this was because according to THE LORD OF THE RINGS, a Balrog is a great big ugly Ultimate Menace, and so to Western ears this fitted the huge fighter better than its dandified original owner. The original Balrog then had to be rechristened, and so the elegant exponent of martial arts became VEGA. (One Japanese STREET FIGHTER 2 book says quite bluntly 'in America and Europe, VEGA is a sissy's name'.) The original Vega became M. BISON to complete the circle.

In this article, the original Japanese names are used. You try telling Balrog he should be an ugly great hulk or calling Vega a sissy to his face if you want to!

*Left top to bottom: Ryo, Honda vs Bison, Guile, Dhalsim, E. Honda  
Centre left to right: Chun-Li, Cammy  
Right top to bottom: Fei Long, Ryo, Ken, Ken vs Vega, Blanka, Fei Long*







## SFII THE DIRECTOR

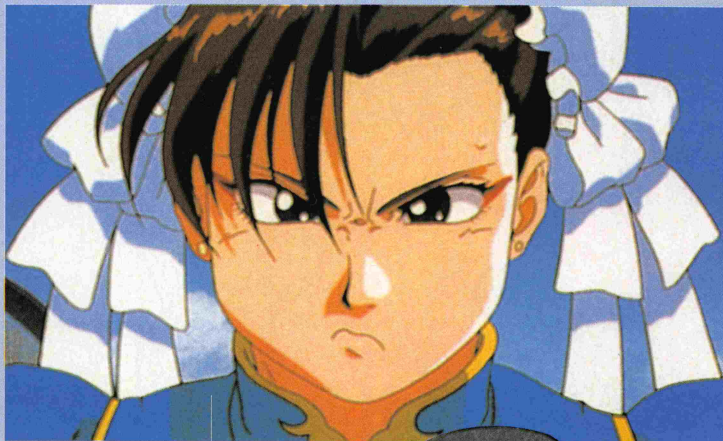
GISABURO SUGII was born in 1940 and began his film career working for Toei Doga in 1958. One of his best-known directorial credits is *NIGHT TRAIN TO THE STARS* (aka *NIGHT ON THE GALACTIC RAILROAD*), 1985, and he also worked on the anime version of the Mitsuru Adachi manga *TOUCH*. He is currently working with Mainichi Eiga. He is modest about his previous achievements, saying that he 'hasn't done more than ten works in all' and that SFII is 'certainly the most dynamic' - because of scheduling problems they had to employ more than three times the usual number of staff members.

He took the job because of his interest in working with the producer, saying 'Mr. Imai is not like most Japanese people; he's very open and says what he thinks.' The pair ended up going to a lot of amusement arcades after work. Director Sugii was very conscious of the need to capture the spirit of the number one battle game, while recreating the whole of its unique world from the glimpses shown onscreen in the original game. The team had to avoid making just another beat-'em-up, but at the same time not load the film down with too many messages and themes that would bore the audience. They also faced the problem of having to produce something that appeals to the whole spectrum of SFII players,

from pre-school children to adult gamers, an anime with no age limits.

The director takes his work very seriously and is renowned for pushing his staff to give of their best at all times. He stresses the importance of the editing process - 'you can fine-tune a scene by cutting - you can't do that with a storyboard' and of sound and music, and has expressed concern that 'if the film makes it onto video (!) the sound levels will drop quite a bit', suggesting that viewers see it in the cinema for the full spectrum of sound. In fact, he thinks that there is bound to be some loss of impact involved in watching SFII - or any other made-for-cinema title - on video. While he doesn't expect there to be any major cuts or changes, and intends to see that the quality of sound and clarity of image is as high as possible, he still feels it's pointless to try to reproduce the large scale impact of a theatrical release outside the cinema. If the screen is smaller, he says, the action must be smaller too.

Asked if there will be a sequel, he laughed, 'I think there just might be ...' and said that he would be happy to work on part 2, providing it could be even better than part 1. He's also directing the SFII anime TV series. The director who 'only flourishes under difficult conditions' wants, like his characters, to face new challenges.



Left top to bottom: Chun-Li vs Balrog, Blanka shock!, Sagat lightning, Cammy vs agent, Chun-Li vs Guile  
Centre top to bottom: Chun-Li; below: the Doctor

Facing page:  
Left top: Vega  
bottom: Monitor Cyborg  
Centre: the Dancer  
Right: Balrog





# SHADOWLAW

## SHADOWLAW

The 'SHITENNO' or FOUR KINGS, are masters of SHADOWLAW, a worldwide crime organisation which influences the balance of military affairs, as well as being involved in assassination, drugs and weapon smuggling. SHADOWLAW has 50 branches around South-East Asia and a HQ on the Cambodian border; half its 4,000 members are fighters, and it has 150 fighter planes, 200 tanks, 5 submarines, and a military satellite - about the same in armaments as the regular army of a small country.

## THE INCIDENTAL

**ELIZA** Ken's fiancée. Her statistics and abilities are totally irrelevant except to Ken ...

**THE DOCTOR** This tiny man is the most intelligent of all the SHADOWLAW scientists. Vega trusts him implicitly. His main role is research into cyborg development.

**SHADOWLAW SCIENTISTS** There are a lot of these about, and they're completely conscienceless, devoted to creating evil machinery for the organisation.

## SHADOWLAW MANAGEMENT

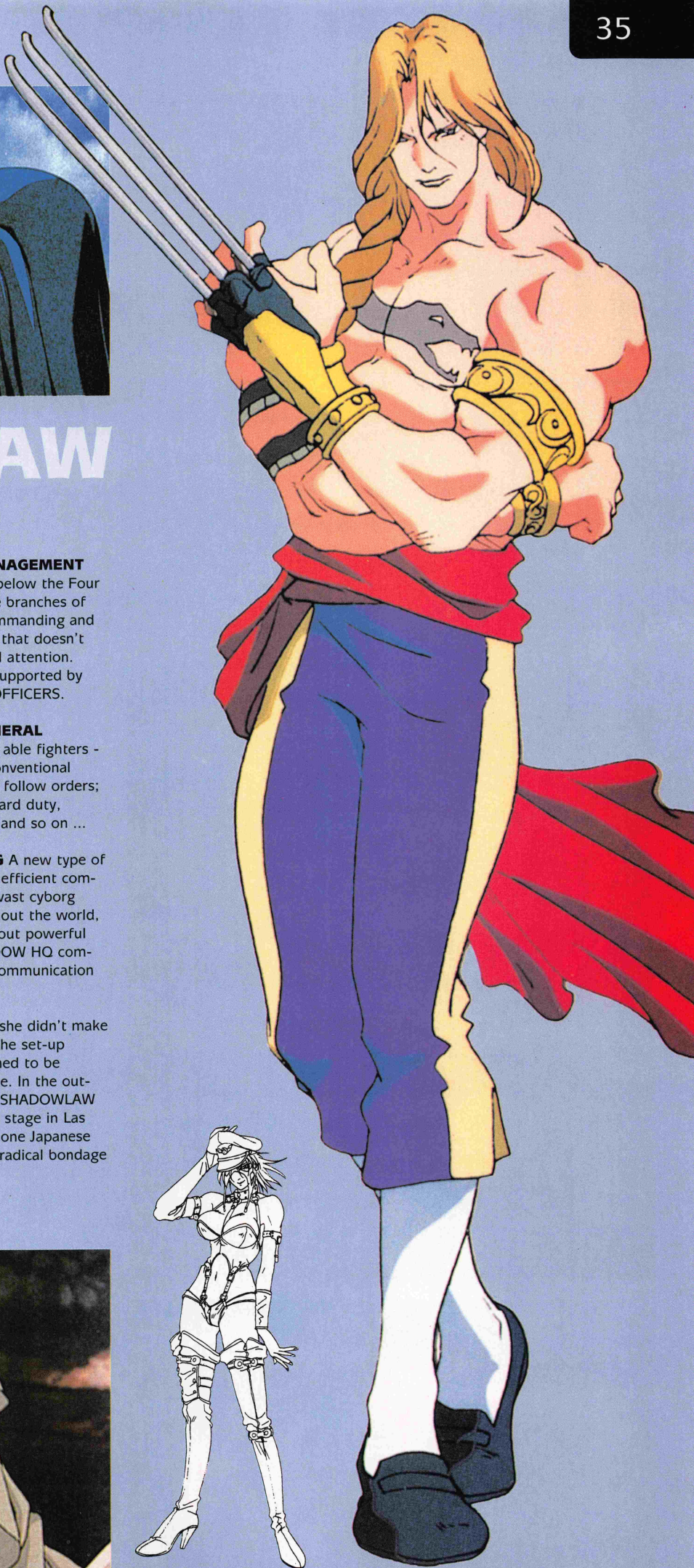
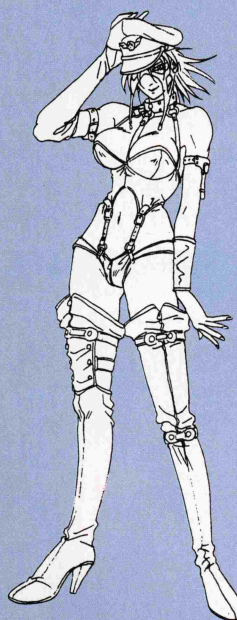
**STAFF** Ranking just below the Four Kings, they supervise branches of the organisation, commanding and supervising anything that doesn't need Vega's personal attention. They're helped and supported by the LOWER-CLASS OFFICERS.

## SHADOWLAW GENERAL

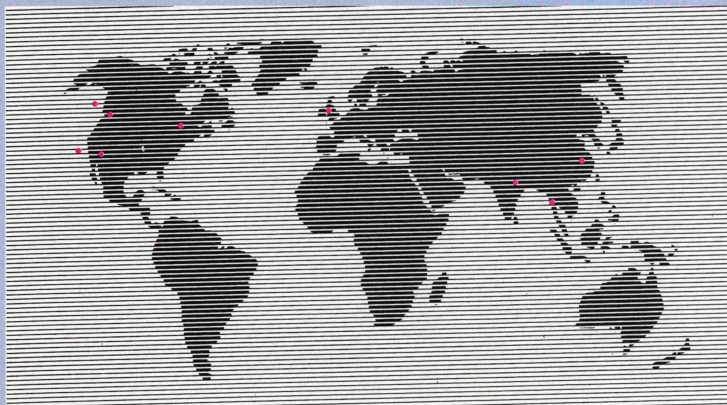
**SOLDIERS** Not very able fighters - they have to carry conventional weaponry - they just follow orders; acts of terrorism, guard duty, mechanical servicing and so on ...

**MONITOR CYBORG** A new type of cyborg with a highly efficient computer, he's one of a vast cyborg army spread throughout the world, which relays data about powerful fighters to the SHADOW HQ computer room via the communication satellite.

**THE DANCER** OK, she didn't make it into the film, but the set-up drawings just screamed to be included in this article. In the outline, she worked for SHADOWLAW and appeared on the stage in Las Vegas wearing what one Japanese source describes as 'radical bondage gear'.





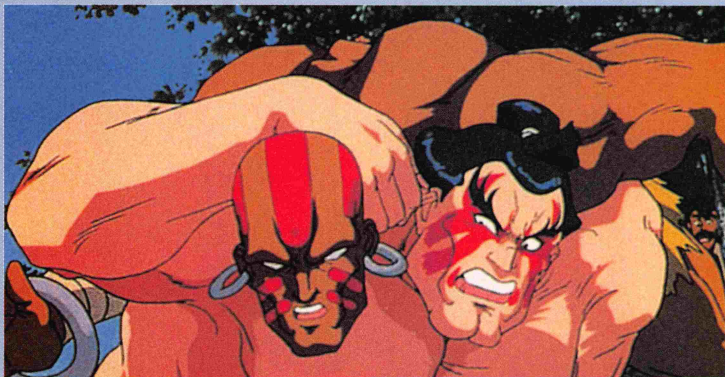
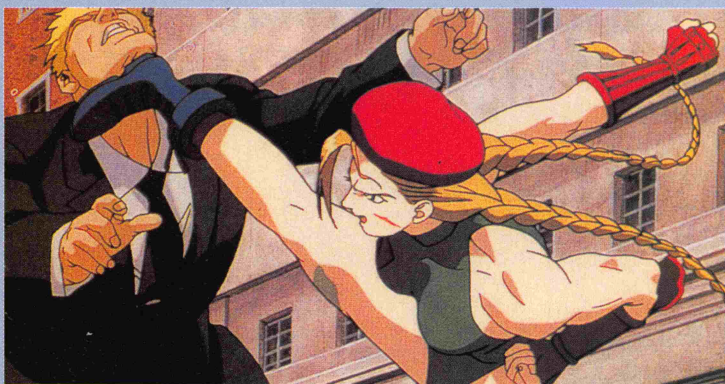


#### BATTLE MAP

- America: North Seattle, Ken vs T.Hawk
- America: Seattle, Ken vs Vega
- America: Patterson Airbase, Chun Li vs Guile
- America: Los Angeles, DJ vs street gang
- America: Las Vegas, Blanka vs Zangief
- America: New York, Chun Li vs Balrog
- England: London, Cammy vs secret police
- India: Calcutta, Dhalsim vs E. Honda
- China: Szechow, Ryu vs Fei Long
- Thailand: Bangkok, Ryu vs Sagat
- Laos Border Mountain Range E. Honda vs Bison
- Guile vs Vega
- Ryu vs Ken
- Ryu & Ken vs Vega

Top: Ryu vs Ken  
Centre: Cammy vs Agent

Bottom: E. Honda vs Dhalsim  
Right: Cammy, alone again, naturally



#### THE STORY

Criminal mastermind Vega has been kidnapping streetfighters and brainwashing them to work for his evil schemes. Ken Masters is waylaid by the Four Kings and dragged off; his last thought is of Ryu ..

In London, Commander Sellers of the Drug Enforcement Squad is murdered by a terrorist while talking to journalists about his team's most recent success. The terrorist is captured, but appears to be suffering from amnesia. She is Cammy Howitt, an English streetfighter who has also been subjected to Vega's mind control. Interpol declares war on Vega's syndicate, and while in the process of investigating, Ryu and Chun Li find Ken in an underground car park, and are forced to fight him. However, when Ryu manages to incapacitate his opponent, it turns out to be Guile in a mask. Ryu demands to know where the real Ken is, but Guile only laughs and mumbles, still under the influence of Vega's brainwashing.

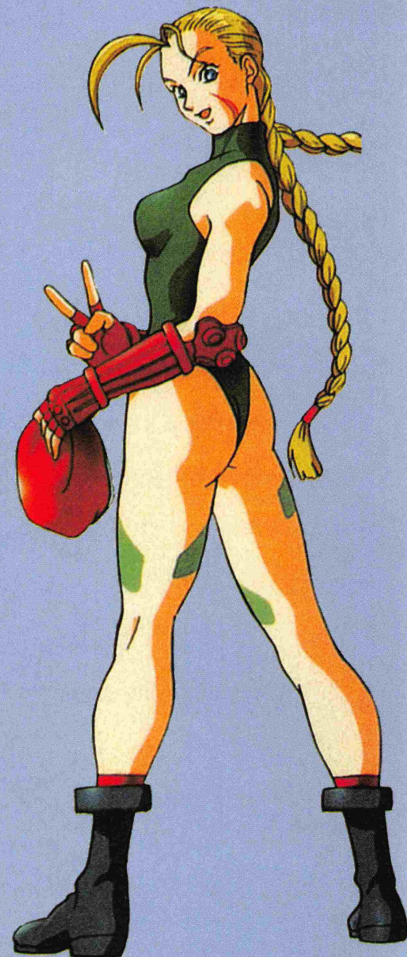
Meanwhile, the real Ken is undergoing the same process, retreating deep inside his memories to the happier days he spent as a youth while training with Ryu. Up and about after his close brush with death at the hands of Ryu, Guile starts assembling the streetfighters for an assault on Shadowlaw ... and this time it's personal.

Chun Li goes off for a shower, which is completely necessary for the plot of course, because while standing naked beneath the hot water, she is plagued by Guile's demands to check the closed circuit recording of his fight with Ryu. She does so, and manages to lip-read the words that Guile mumbled before Vega broke his mind-control: "Five o'clock, on Mount Soryu". She rushes to the phone to tell Guile of Vega's whereabouts, but is surprised by Balrog's attack. As Balrog prepares to deliver the killing blow, Chun Li sees the spirit of her dead father, who tells her that it is not yet time for her to join him in the afterlife. With one last burst of energy she throws Balrog out of her hotel window. He lands in the street, where he finds himself bumping into old pals E. Honda, T. Hawk and DeeJay. They beat him up (again), but that's no help to Chunners, who is bleeding to death a dozen floors above.

Worried at her truncated call, Guile rushes to Chun Li's room, where she has written the time and place on the wall in her own blood before losing consciousness.

Ryu reaches Mount Soryu, where he finds Vega and Ken waiting for him. Ken's mind now belongs to Vega, and, thinking that Ryu is an attacking bear, he fights his old-time friend and ally. But when they bump heads, Vega's mind control is broken. As Guile arrives with reinforcements, Ken and Ryu fight with Vega, first destroying a fake by mistake. Vega is thrown into the air and impaled on the front line of an aircraft, which then explodes. It's all over for Vega ... or is it? The boys can't see the body, and aren't even sure if it was the real Vega they attacked. The Streetfighters prepare to go home once more, but as Ryu heads out he passes a truck with a familiar figure at the wheel...

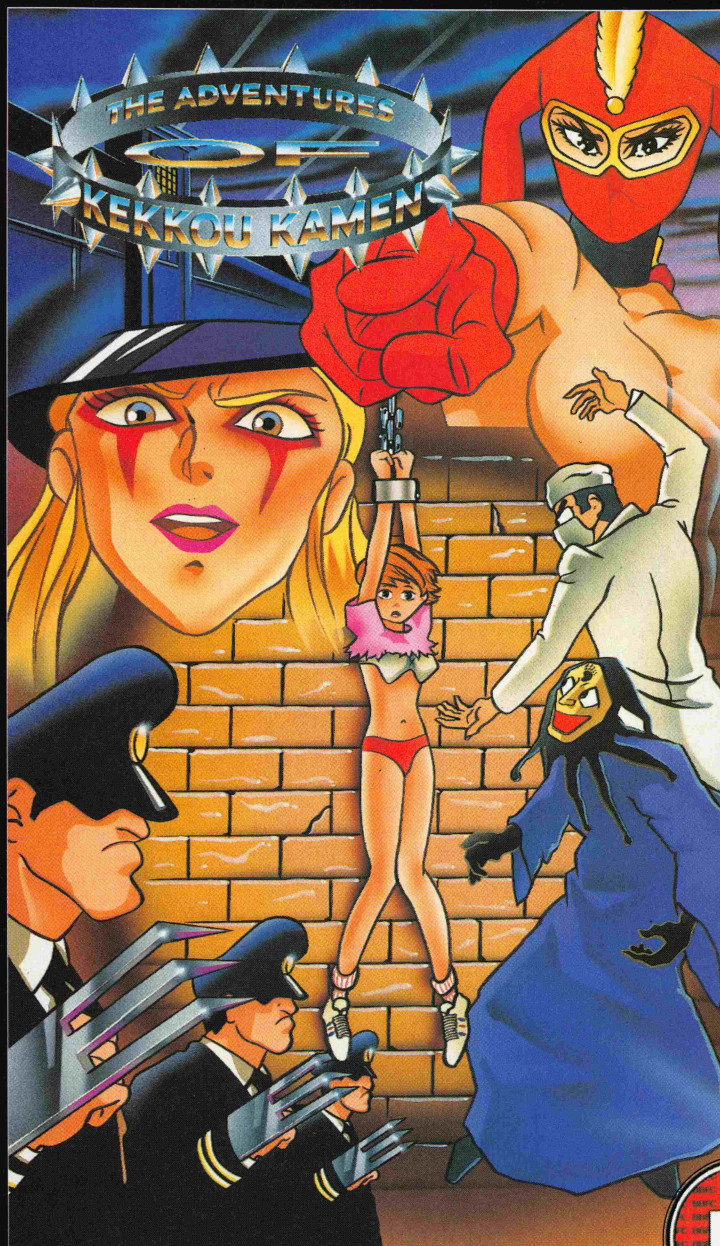
**IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:**  
the cast and crew, the music,  
the spinoffs - more about  
the animated world of  
**STREETFIGHTER II**



Turn to page 44/45 for more data on the World Warriors, and don't miss Part 2 of this feature in the next Anime UK



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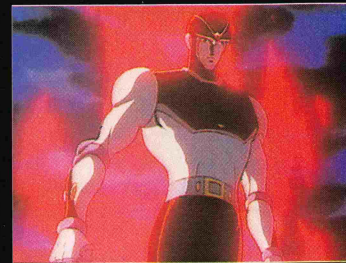
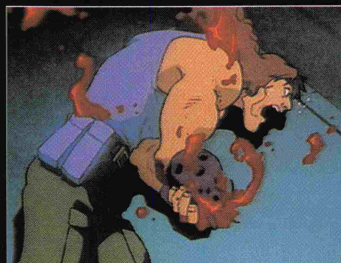


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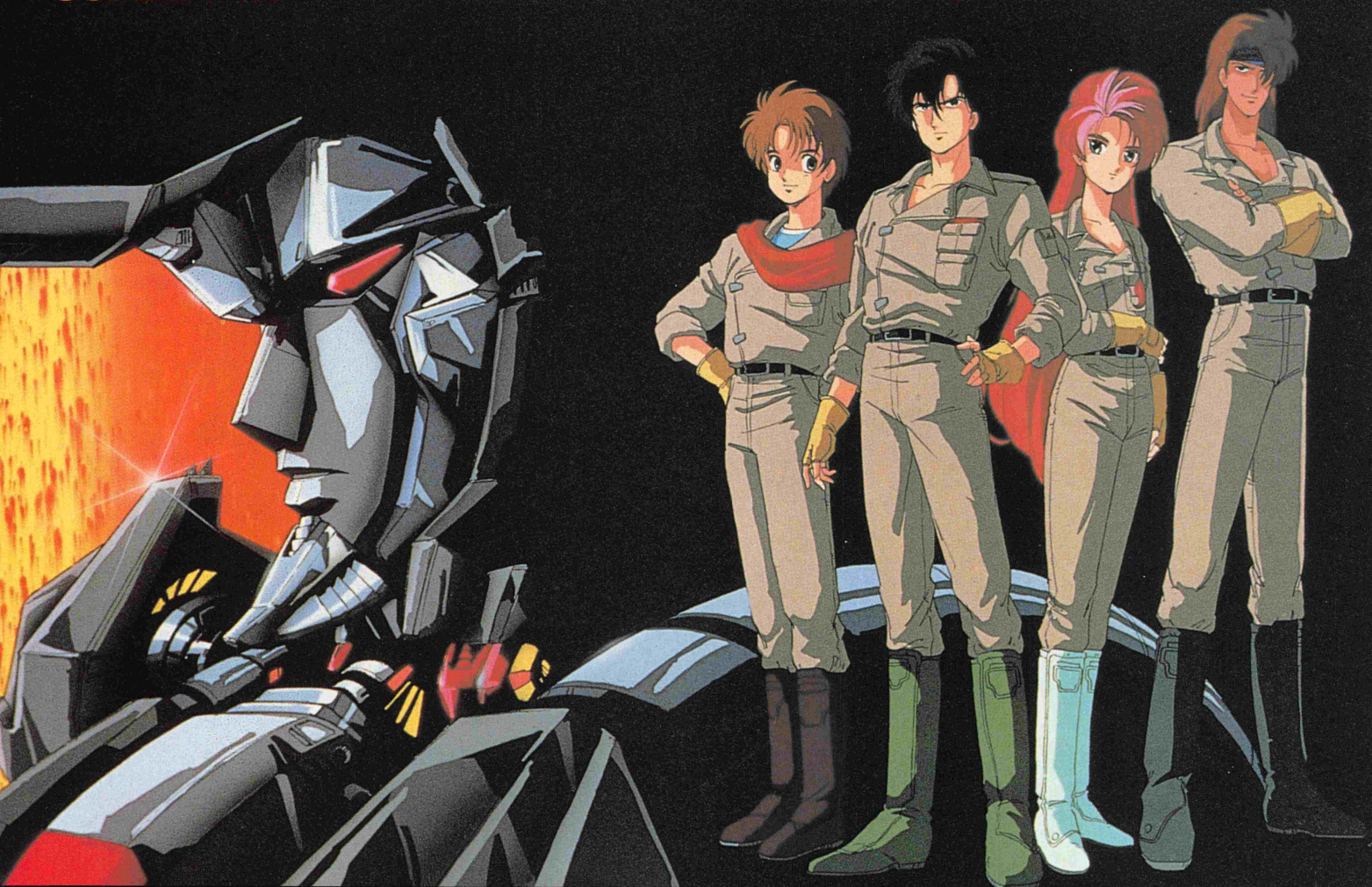


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**SUPER BESTIAL MACHINE GOD**

# DANCOUGAR



Above : The face of DANCOUGAR with, left to right, Masato, Shinobu, Sara and Ryu

Below left : Shinobu in angry mood, with (below l to r) Masato, Ryu and Sara

Below right : Dancougar



by Helen McCarthy

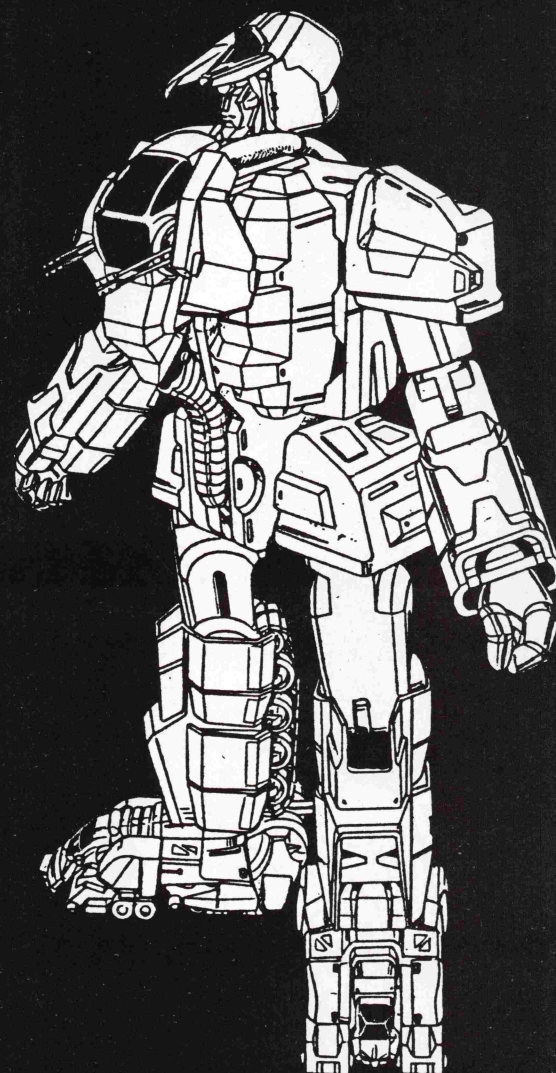
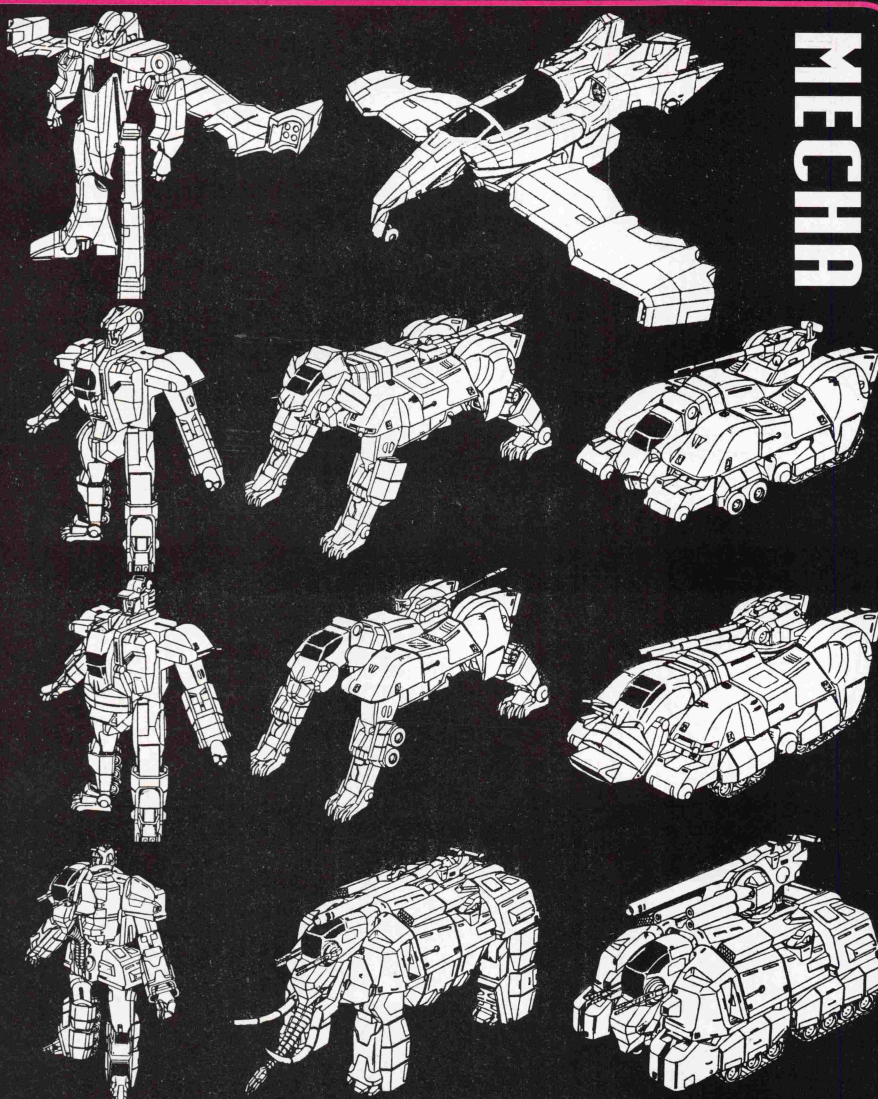


超獣機神  
**ダンクーガ**



HEAD  
RIGHT FOOT  
LEFT FOOT  
TORSO

MECHA



Head: A.G.H.-1, A.G.B.-1  
Right Foot: A.G.H.-2, A.G.B.-2, A.G.T.-2  
Left Foot: A.G.H.-3, A.G.B.-3, A.G.T.-3  
Torso: A.G.H.-4, A.G.B.-4, A.G.T.-4

The four component mecha in each of their forms  
A.G.H. = Humanoid Form, A.G.B. = Beast Form, A.G.T. = Tank Form  
1 = Eagle Fighter, 2 = Land Riger, 3 = Land Cougar, 4 = Big Moth  
Right: The four mecha assembled into DANCUGAR mode

## SUPERBESTIAL MACHINE GOD DANCUGAR (CHOJU KISHIN DANCUGAR)

It's a weapon developed by Khotaru Hazuki, making use of the latest highlevel technology to fuse a human's aggression and intelligence to its own strengths and raise its fighting efficiency to a maximum, making it almost godlike. It's four machines which can operate in tank, animal or humanoid form as well as combining into the mighty robot DANCUGAR, and four young people trained to the highest level. It's Earth's sole defence against the power of the alien Zolubados Empire.

The DANCUGAR OAV released by Western Connection is only a small part of the DANCUGAR universe. A TV series and another OAV preceded it, telling the story of the struggle against the soldiers of the Empire. The regular army was almost overwhelmed, and so the Beast War Army was organised in secret, operating from a hidden base on Izu Island. As the war

spread to space, more of the base's secrets could be discovered, but by then the Beast War Army was a vital component in Earth's struggle - not that this made it any more popular with the regular forces, some of whom also resented the young pilots chosen to control these awesome new weapons. They were all just Officer School cadets - one of them only at elementary level! - until the war closed down the school. Yet none of the regular forces have weaponry on this level.

None of this is explained in the film because it's presumed that audiences are fans of the series who already know all they need to know. Here's a little background to help you fill in the gaps.

**THE EMPIRE**  
**MUGE ZOLUBADOS** is Emperor of a planet somewhere in the Milky Way; his palace is in a dimensional fault that resembles a black hole, yet has three stars shining in its depths; the brightest, central star is the Zolubados Palace. The planet is highly developed and Muge seeks to

extend his dominion over the whole Milky Way, then come to Earth, which he plans to use as his summer villa. His face is always masked and his origins a mystery.

**SHAPIRO KEATS** is a fugitive Human who commands the army of Zolubados. Once an instructor at Earth's Universal Officer School, he was involved with Sara Yuki, yet left his homeworld to lead alien forces against it.

**LUNA ROSSA, GIRUDOROME, DEATHGAIA** and **HELMUT** are the Muges Generals, ambitious and ruthless, who distrust each other and compete fiercely for the notice of the Emperor. Deathgaia has an insect-like combat plane, and the army also uses mecha and exoskeletons for combat. The winged Helmut is the strongest of the three, but all are under Keats' command.

**THE HUMANS**  
**SHINOBU FUJIWARA** was 18 at the start of the series, and was a student at the Universal Officer

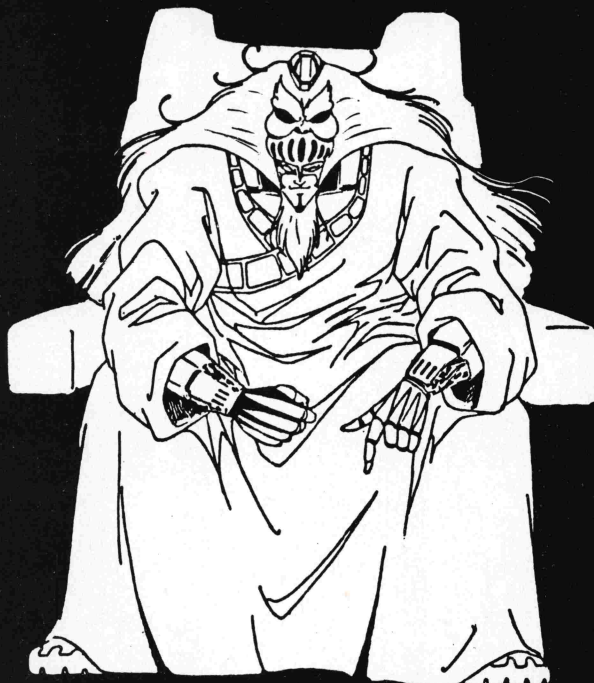
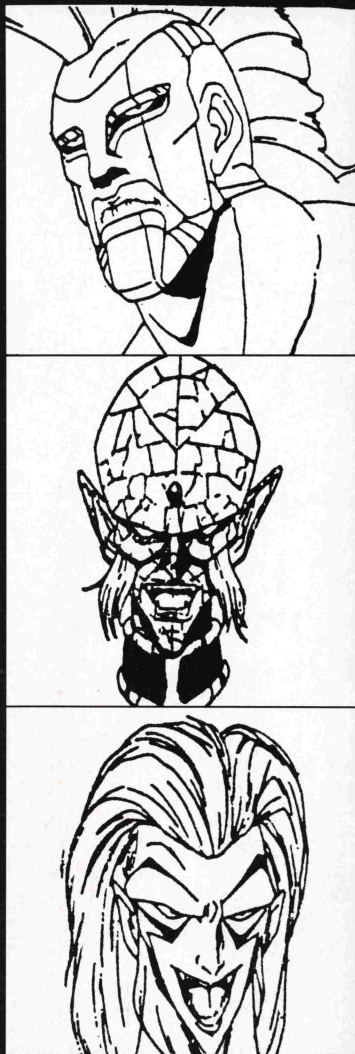
School, joining the army when the Zolubados invasion closed it down. He's a rebel at heart, but takes a very professional attitude to his work. He hails from the mountains and, deep down, is looking for love and security in his life. He pilots the Eagle Fighter.

**SARA YUKI** is the same age as Shinobu and was a student at the school, too. After it closed she went home to her family at the seaside, but was allowed by them to join up. Her aggressive, emotional battle-style is typical of her strong character and perhaps of the broken romance in her past. She pilots the Land Kruger.

CHOJU KISHIN DANCUGAR  
Super Bestial Machine God Dancougar, 33 x 25min TV series 1985  
CHOJU KISHIN DANCUGAR - USHINA WARETA MONOTAOMI E NO REQUIEM  
Super Bestial Machine God Dancougar: Requiem of Victims, 90 min OAV 1986  
CHOJU KISHIN DANCUGAR - God Bless Dancougar, 80 min OAV 1987  
CHOJU KISHIN DANCUGAR - Final Chapter, 4 x 25min OAV series 1990



# DANCOUGAR



## 超獣機神 ダンクーガ

Above left (top to bottom): Deathgaia, Girudorome, Helmut  
Above centre: Muge Zolubados  
Above right (top to bottom): Shapiro Keats, Luna Rossa  
Below, l to r: Ryu, Sara, Shinobu, Masato

**RYO SHIBA** left the officer school as soon as he entered it. His more mature approach belies the fact that he's only a year older than Sara and Shinobu, and he and the younger man don't get on because he hates what he calls 'childish chatter'. His impulse is to knock down anything and everything that stands against him, but he mostly uses subtler, less direct methods. He pilots the Big Moth.

**MASATO SHIKIBU** was in the Elementary Universal Officer School when it closed; younger than the others, he is very idealistic and was very much against his father's work on weapons development. He's a cheerful boy and he fancies Laura. He pilots the Land Riger.

**LAURA SULLIVAN** was 12 at the start of the series, and lost her father when she was very small and her mother in the invasion. The effects of shock made her almost mute but she recovered. She and Masato fall in love.

**KHOTARU HAZUKI** used to be an authority on advanced bio-research in Japan before the war; he is now a sub-chief in the Army, and is 38 years old.



**THE EAGLE FIGHTER** is a remodelled universal fighter plane with a great war record behind it, and can now fly 2,500 km at Mach 3.5. It carries a 20mm Vulcan cannon and missiles, and in transformation it becomes the head of DANCOUGAR.

**LAND RIGER** is a tiger-style medium land tank with a speed of 100km/h and a 2-barrelled 105mm cannon. Transformed into beast mode, it doubles its speed. It forms DANCOUGAR's right leg.

**LAND COUGAR** is a panther-style small tank with a range of 3000km at 120km/h; in beastmode that speed triples. It has an elaborate laser-beam sniper gun and forms DANCOUGAR's left leg.

**BIG MOTH** is a mammoth-style heavy amphibian tank with a range of 4000km at 70km/h. Its armament includes a four-barrel rocket launcher and there's enough room inside for massive quantities of supplies. Alone of the four mecha its speed decreases in beast mode. It forms the body of DANCOUGAR.



**JULIA SERTORI** starts practicing her high-kicks for... **IRONFIST!**

If you've ever wondered what would happen if you crossed Bruce Lee with Asterix the Gaul, now you've got the chance to find out. Takeshi Maekawa's *Tekken* (Ironfist) Chinmi dealt its first karate kick in 1983, when the comic serialisation began in *Monthly Shonen* magazine. Nearly 6000 pages later, he's still going strong, with twenty-eight compilation volumes from Kodansha, a TV anime series from Toho, a Chinese version from Tong Li Comics, and now the lead position in Bloomsbury's new manga line.

The first two volumes of *Ironfist* hit shelves all over Britain this July, and it represents a major new force in UK manga. For a start, it's the biggest manga release ever in Britain, with twice the print-run of *Akira*. It's also the first UK comic to be run in the Japanese page order, a major experiment in the way we read our comics. Some are saying it'll never work, but if the Spanish can buy *Dragonball* with right-to-left pages, why can't we manage *Ironfist*?

*Ironfist* has been described as a Japanese Asterix, and there are certainly many similarities. Both comics are set in the distant past and in a foreign land; Asterix in ancient France, and *Ironfist* in medieval China. Both have spunky, bel-ligerent heroes with hearts of gold, doddering old sorcerors with magic potions, and a few excruciating puns. But Getafix never started quoting Confucius in the original Chinese, and Asterix never had a flatulent monkey for a best friend.

Star of the show is the ironfist himself, kung-fu boy Chinmi. Chinmi starts off the series as a young boy helping out in his sister's tavern, but one of the joys of the manga is that we get to watch him grow up. In the later books he's a Kung-fu Master, leading the resistance against the Mongol invaders, with a team of henchmen who are strong enough to take on armies by themselves. But when we first meet our hero, he still has to learn the finer points of the martial arts. He's clumsy, loud-mouthed, and can't even sit with his legs crossed. It's the job of his teachers at the Dailin Temple to try and beat some sense into him, and Chinmi learns very fast that the martial arts isn't always about smashing bricks and snapping bones. Maekawa's comic is a very thoughtful commentary, not just on kung-fu, but on growing up, and its Confucian

emphasis is not just restricted to Abbot Zheng's mad quotes. In the space of the first six volumes alone, those who follow young Chinmi's adventures will learn all kinds of handy tips, which are just as relevant to modern Japan as they are to medieval China. And if some of them sound-ever-so-slightly similar to the teachings of

This begins with the Dailin entrance exam, in which he has to "cut the moon in half". Don't worry, even Chinmi takes three days to figure that one out, but he manages it in the end. Then he has to escape from a room with no door, using only his mind's eye.

Chinmi is forced to sit and think until he understands it, and Maekawa's illustrative style

opponents' strength against them on a fishing trip with the Zen Master, and when he's thrown in the ring against the Poison Fist, it's the Old Master who shows him that even danger is an illusion. It takes five books before Chinmi gets to pick up his first weapon, but even then, the lessons are never-ending, and each one draws on the previous experiences he has shared with his readers. One one occasion, he even turns to the readers to ask them what they think; he's such a sweet boy...

*Ironfist* is great fun, and it's addictive, with both the translator and editor admitting they've had to sneak a peek at future episodes to find out what happens next. But *Ironfist* also has less to do with fighting than one might think, as one look at Chinmi's unique style will tell you. Bruce Lee never threw a farting monkey at his opponents, stuck his fingers up their noses or distracted them with tales of flying cows, which is probably why Chinmi will be a hit with the youngsters. *Ironfist* is also a deceptively pacifist manga, because for all of his fights and scrapes, Chinmi's real lessons always come in the form of lateral thinking and common sense. Just don't tell the children that it's supposed to be doing them good. They'll be too busy laughing at the fight scenes, or trying out the latest insults on each other. That or trying to snatch the comics back from the adults, who'll be poring through trying to count all the famous film quotes they can spot. In the end, though, the kids will win, because Barry Cunningham at Bloomsbury says they'll always be ahead of the parents with the reversed page order. It'll be something the kids can handle that their parents can't, and they'll love it. Could this be the first time in history that adults demand their children read them a bedtime story? We'll have to wait and see.

### Characters Chinmi

Loveable, hot-headed young tyke with a heart of gold. His best friend is a monkey, he's always there to help damsels in distress, and he has a nice line in wisecracking insults to surprise the enemy. A kung-fu natural, he's still not averse to shouting "look behind you!" and then whack-



one Obi-Wan Kenobi, that's because Maekawa is plundering the same ancient sources as George Lucas. Chinmi thinks philosophy is a waste of time, but again and again his teachers set him tasks that only prove how useful it can be.

lets the readers see the clues at the same time as our hero. While studying with Tiandao on Mount Shen, Chinmi learns the value of meditation, and he puts this to good use when he has to hide in the dark from the leader of the Black Flame. Chinmi learns how to use his

# IRONFIST CHINMI





Above left (top to bottom): Chinmi, Old Master, Riki  
Above right (top to bottom): Abbot Zheng, Ryukai  
Right: Chinmi develops his personal style in various training sessions

ing his foes with a frying pan. His name doesn't actually mean anything in Japanese, but the Hong Kong translation calls him Chahn-mahn (Displaying-cleverness'), which would be Chen-min in Mandarin.

#### Old Master

Two things must you know about the Old Master. Firstly, he is a Master. And secondly, he is Old. So old and masterful, in fact, that he doesn't even have a proper name any more, he specialises in the Art of the Drunken Fist, getting smashed so that you may smash unto others.

#### Tiandao (Heavenly-way)

The Zen Master who lives on Mount Shen, he comes out of retirement to train Chinmi. Tiandao specialises in fishing and meditation, neither of which seems very useful to Chinmi, at first... Tiandao can even walk on water, but only when it's frozen solid.

#### Ryukai (Dragon-sea)

A master of 'qi', or life force, Ryukai can harden his muscles until they blunt steel blades and fell opponents just by pointing his finger. But Ryukai has a dark past, and one that comes back to haunt him in book 4.

#### Abbot Zheng (Rectitude)

Another practitioner of the Drunken Fist, the senile old Abbot is still way too fast for Chinmi. He tries really hard to teach everyone Chinese proverbs, but it's all Greek to Chinmi.

#### Riki (Force/Power)

Riki may be a blind gardener, but in his spare time he is a Master of the Staff. It's Riki who teaches Chinmi that beautiful roses may conceal deadly thorns, and that the ugliest of plants could be a life-saving herbal remedy. Deep.







# IRONFIST

## Ironfist Volume Guide

Bloomsbury are releasing the first six volumes of *Ironfist* as an experiment this summer. All going well, the other twenty-two will follow fast behind, but with 40 new pages being written every month, it'll be a while before we ever catch up with the Japanese editions.

### 1: Kung-fu Boy Chinmi

Chinmi is a young boy with a natural ability at kung-fu. The Old Master invites him to come to Dailin and train at the temple, and Chinmi agrees because he like the look of the Way of the Drunken Fist. But there is a long journey ahead of them, and Chinmi has an uncanny knack of getting into fights...

### 2: Journey to Mount Shen

After passing the tests of the Dailin Temple, Chinmi earns the chance to train with the Zen Master on Mount Shen. But all Master Tiandao wants to do is go fishing, and Chinmi can't see the point. Meanwhile, he has to cope with deadly snakes, walking on water, and a dangerous mix of high-diving and speed-reading...

### 3: Victory for the Spirit

Back in Dailin, Chinmi meets the beautiful Yang. She is selling vegetables to try and pay off her father's debts, but little does she know that an evil money-lender is preparing to pay them off himself, by selling her into slavery. Chinmi takes on the money-lender, but finds himself fighting a bodyguard who has trained in Mantis Kung-fu, the Art of the Pointing Fist...

### 4: Leap of Faith

After badly wounding Chinmi's teacher Ryukai, the enigmatic Wong challenges the champion of the Dailin Temple to a duel to the death. With Ryukai out of action, Chinmi volunteers, but then he discovers that Wong has studied the Art of the Poison Fist. One touch from Wong, and Chinmi's life is over, and the Abbot isn't helping by ordering Chinmi not to fight back. Chinmi starts to suffer from a bad case of the jitters, and the Old Master decides it's time to cure him or kill him!

### 5: Attack of the Black Flame

A horde of bandits are holding the village to ransom, and Chinmi's sister Mei Ling is among their hostages. Chinmi breaks into the camp to rescue her, and causes so much trouble that the bandits forget about the village and come after him. Wounded and cut off from the temple, Chinmi has to fight their leader in single combat; and if he wins, he'll have to take on the rest of them too...

### 6: Blind Fury

It's time for Chinmi to start weapons training, and the Old Master places him with Riki the Master of the Staff. Even though Riki is blind, he seems to 'see' a lot more than Chinmi, and he teaches him how things may not always be exactly as they appear.

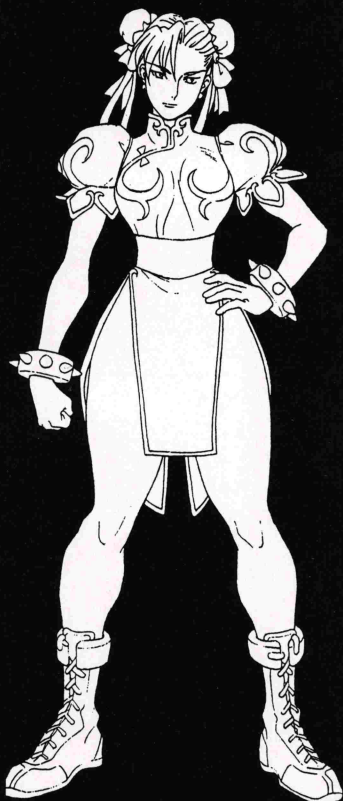




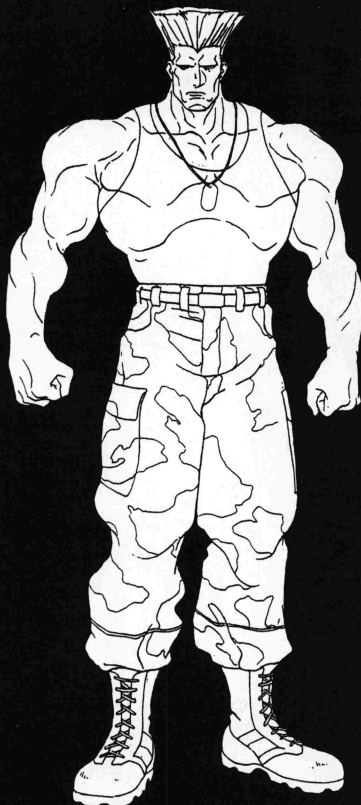
AMERICA: Born 14 Feb 1965, height 176 cm, weight 76kgm stats 114-82-86, bloodtype O. Likes spaghetti, hates pickled plums

**KEN**

CHINA: Born 1 March 1968, height 170cm weight classified, stats 88-5890, bloodtype A. Likes all kinds of fruit, crepes; hates Vega.

**CHUN-LI**

AMERICA: Born 23 Dec 1960, height 182 cm, weight 86kg, stats 125-83-89, bloodtype O. Likes American coffee, hates natto (a Japanese dish of fermented soybeans).

**GUILE**

JAPAN: Born 21 July 1965, height 175 cm, weight 68 kg, statistics 112-81-85 cm, bloodtype O. Likes martial arts, hates spiders.

**RYU****SAGAT**

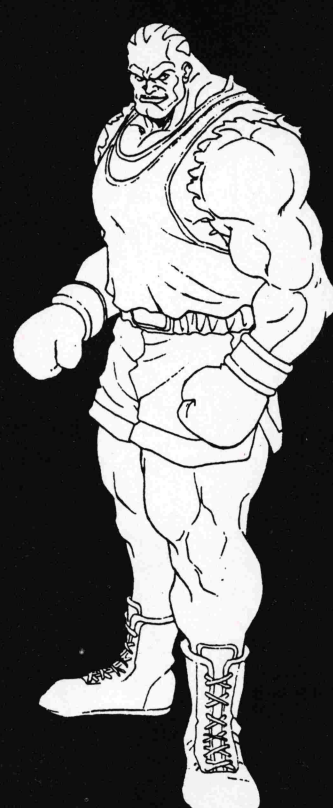
THAILAND: Born 2 July 1955, height 226 cm, weight 78kg, stats 130-86-95, bloodtype B. Likes fighting the strong, hates Ryu & Ken's special attack.

**VEGA**

SHADOWLAW: Born 14 April, year unknown. Height 182cm, weight 80kg, stats 12985-91, bloodtype A. Likes world domination, hates useless minions and weak things.

**BALROG**

SPAIN: Born 27 Jan 1967, height 186cm, weight 72kg, stats 121-73-84, bloodtype O. Likes pretty things, himself; hates ugly things. The Editor's favourite on account of that lovely long hair and those legs...

**M BISON**

AMERICA: Born Mike Bison, 4 Sept 1968, height 198cm, weight 102 kg, stats 12089-100, bloodtype A. Likes women, bourbon, hates fish, mathematics and hard work.

**SFII-DASH THE 'SHITENNO'**



## SFII-DASH

INDIA: Born 22 Nov 52. Height 176 cm (he says ...) weight normally 48kg (but both can be changed by force of will), stats 107-46-65, bloodtype O. Likes curry, meditation, yoga; hates sweet things.

**DHALSIM**

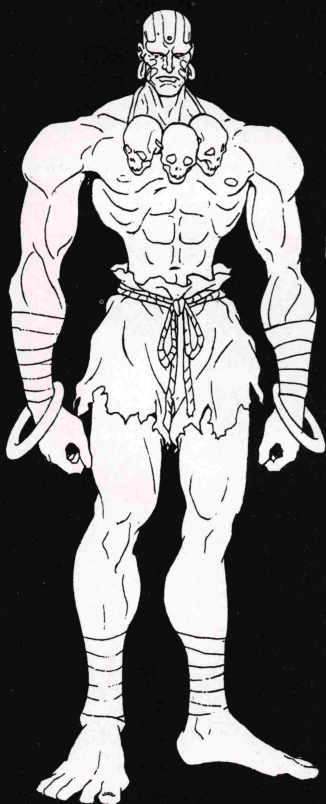
SOVIET UNION: Born 1 June 1966, height 211 cm, weight 115kg, stats 163-128-150, blood type A. Likes wrestling, cossack dancing, hates the special attacks of the other charas.

**ZANGIEF**

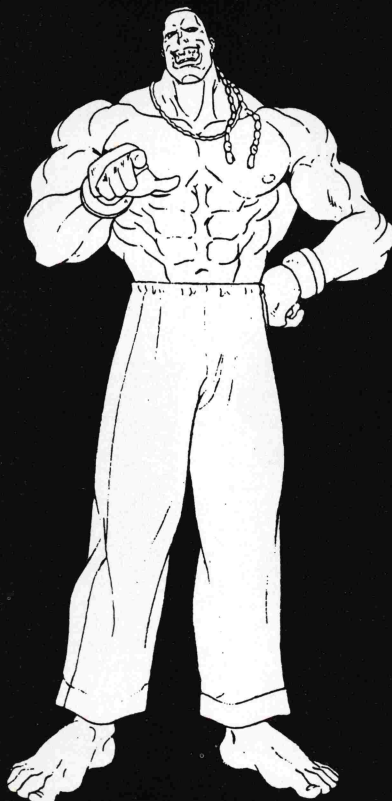
BRAZIL: born 12 feb 1966, height 192cm, weight 98kg, stats 198-120-172, blood type B. Likes Samantha, hates soldier ants.

**BLANKA**

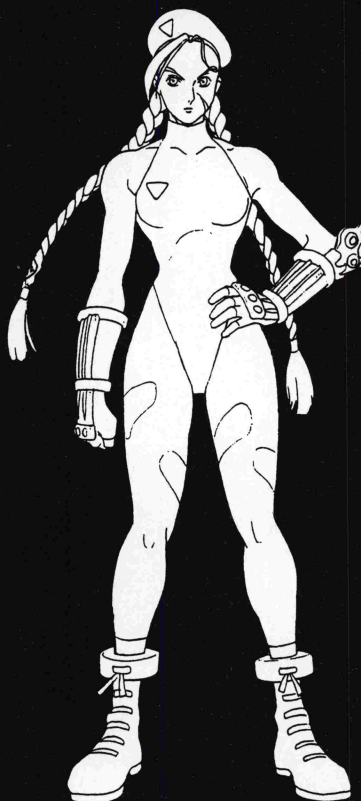
JAPAN: Born Edmondo Honda, 3 Nov 1961, height 185cm (inc topknot), weight 137kg, stats 212-180-210, blood type A. Likes tiramisu, chankonbe (sumo staple food), baths; hates indecisiveness.

**E HONDA****FEI LONG**

HONG KONG: Born 23 April 1969, height 172cm, weight 60kg, stats 108-7680, blood type O. Likes Kung fu, self-improvement; hates when he gets so wrapped up or angry that his powers get confused. You know the feeling, don't you?

**DEE JAY**

JAMAICA: Born 31 Oct 1965, height 184 cm, weight 92kg, stats 130-89-94, blood type AB. Likes shouting, dancing and singing, hates silence.

**CAMMY**

ENGLAND: Born 6 Jan 1964, height 164cm, weight 64kg, stats 88-57-88, blood type B. Likes cats, hates the fact that everyone can tell she's in a bad mood just by the look in her eyes.

**T HAWK**

MEXICO: Born Thunder Hawk, 21 July 1959, height 230 cm, weight 162 kns, stats 14498-112, blood type O. Likes animals, hair ornaments, hates those who speak with forked tongue. Doesn't like fighting but has been known to get involved when he's angry.

**SUPER SFII**



**GREAT BATTLE IV**

BANPRESTO  
SUPER NINTENDO  
(JAPANESE IMPORT)

As you all know, the SD character is pretty big business in Japan opening up otherwise male dominated genres to the many Shōjo who worship the "cute" versions of their brothers heroes.

Banpresto know this and have been producing a wide range of SD games over the years from football to racing via the good old platform game. Great Battle Four is one of their latest and , dare I say it, best SD game to be released yet!

Dropping the Final Fight Engine for a straight forward Platform romp seems to have done this series the world of good. Now one or two players can team up for some serious platform/shooting action. Four Characters can be selected and used during the progress of the game, Gundam V2, the old favourite Ultraman, Kamen Rider and Banpresto's own mascot character

in this series Raoh. Each has their own special powers and weapons to help you past the various obstacles encountered and all will need to be mastered to get through the many levels intact. Platforms are not the only things in the way of the player though as every few levels the Great Battle team have to fend off a giant enemy mech in a beat-em-up sub game. Although fairly lightweight, the beat-em-up section is still fun and adds to what is already a decent platformer.

The graphics in this game are great. The sprites are large, clear and, most importantly, cute! The enemy hordes are drawn from the various shows that the player characters originated from, ranging from a variety of Gundam mechs to the various rubber-suited monsters of the Ultraman universe to the beefy heavies of the Kamen Rider series and all are undeniably cute. The graphics of the levels are pretty good too with some especially nice effects of crashing spaceships and streaking missiles to be seen in the first level. The giant

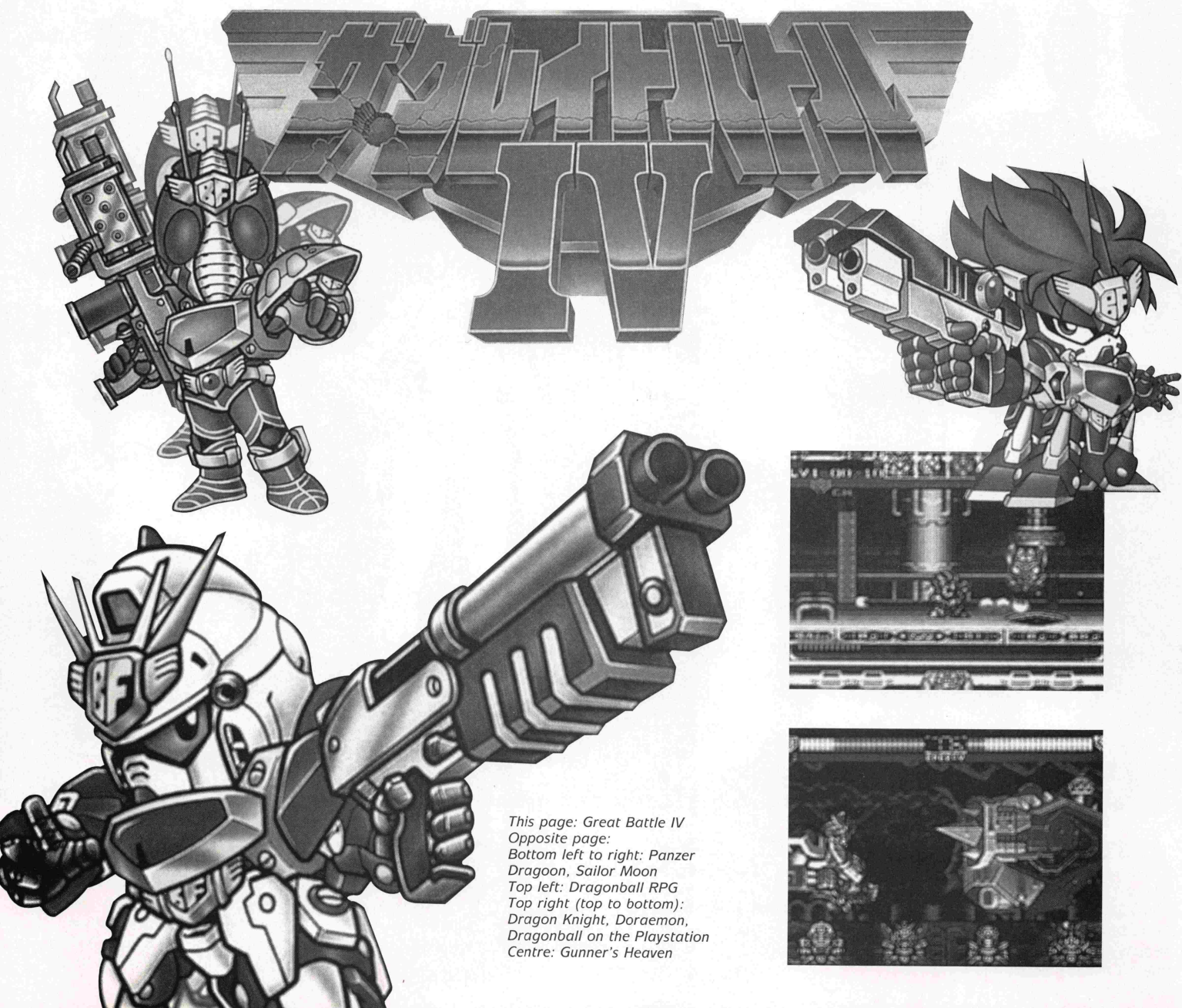
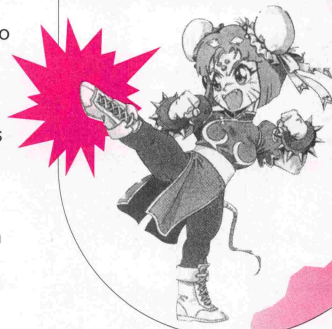
mech transformation sequence shown before each fight section is quite nice capturing the cheesiness of mech transformations seen in various Japanese shows (Power Rangers anyone ?).

The game is fairly challenging too and with a number of secret areas to find and some quite tough enemy bosses to deal with, it presents a reasonable challenge to hardened platform enthusiasts. The inclusion of the two player option and the giant mech fighting sequences gives this game enough variety to make it worth a look. Unfortunately the availability of this game outside of Japan is mostly in the hands of importers so you may have to shop around to find it. Good luck!

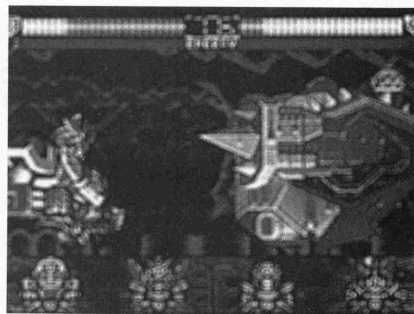
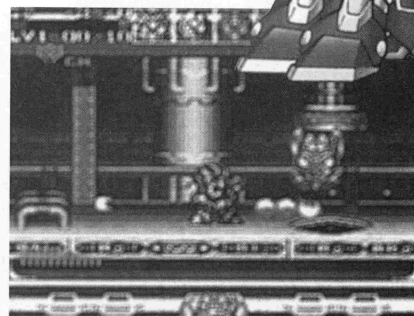
Overall, this is a decent platform game and is worth a look, especially if your a fan of all things cute. **83%**

*Thanks to Jim for his help in getting hold of the more obscure games.*

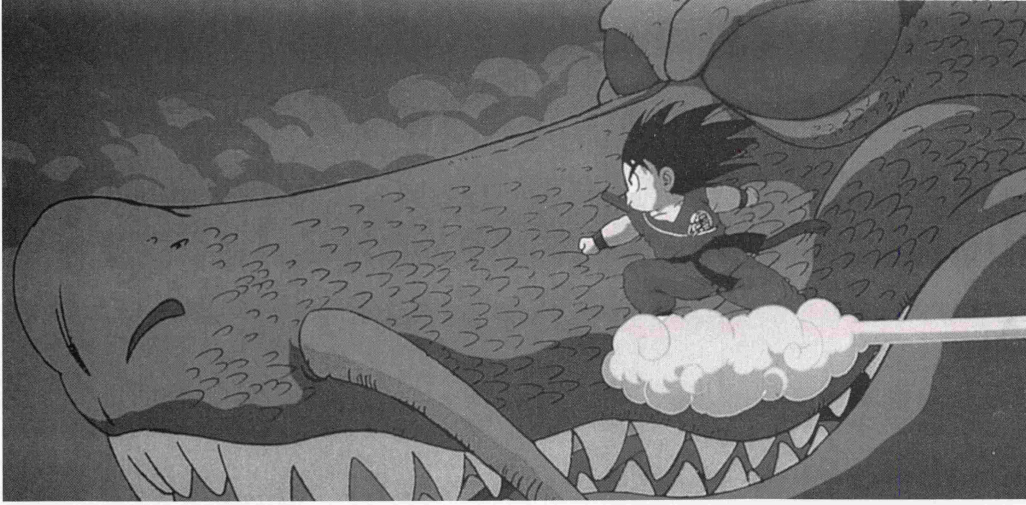
# GAMES CAPSULE



*This page: Great Battle IV  
Opposite page:  
Bottom left to right: Panzer  
Dragoon, Sailor Moon  
Top left: Dragonball RPG  
Top right (top to bottom):  
Dragon Knight, Doraemon,  
Dragonball on the Playstation  
Centre: Gunner's Heaven*





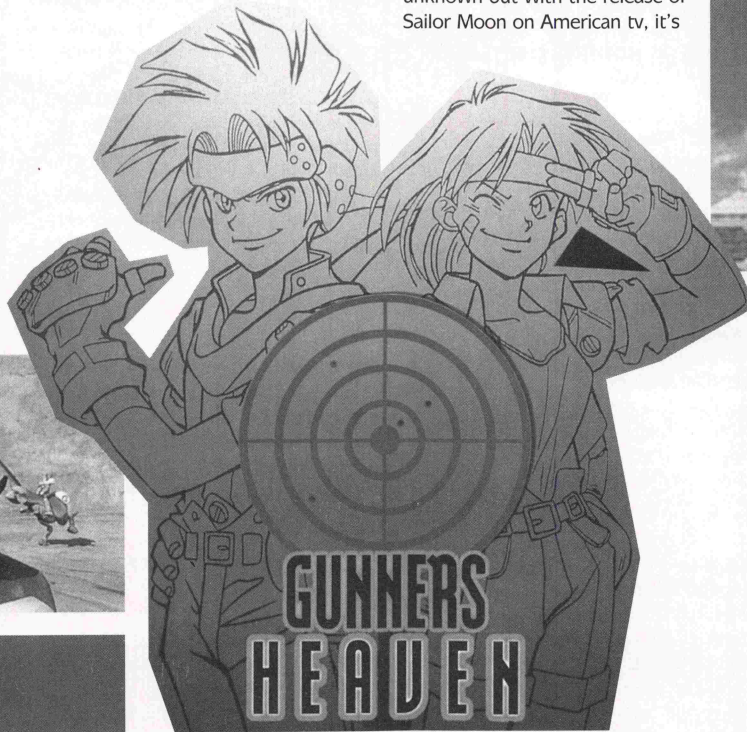


The month of March saw the arrival of the annual Electronic Computer Trade Show in Olympia, London. There wasn't a great deal of things around relevant to these pages but Sony were there in force showing off their Playstation Console and announcing a September 95 release. Sega played it low-key with visitors having to board a coach shuttle service to Sega HQ for demonstrations of the Saturn which, surprisingly, is also due for a September release. Nintendo amazed everybody at the show by not turning up at all, so it looks like the first round of the super console war will be fought by Sony and Sega this Winter.

Still, things have been pretty hectic in Japan with a whole host of stuff coming out this year. Sticking with the Sega and Saturn consoles, we saw Panzer Dragoon released on the Saturn in March. Featuring an absolutely gorgeous intro which

reeked of Miyazaki's Nausicaa, Panzer Dragoon is a nifty 3D shoot-em-up that will certainly shift units on the Saturn's release. Meanwhile, the Playstation has 3x3 Eyes and Dragonball Z games to look forward to over the next few months. Dragonball Z looks like an update of the SNES beat-em-up so I'll look forward to giving you the lowdown on this when I can. Also Playstation bound is a cool looking platform

releases out now for the system. Sailor Moon's 3DO outing is a beat-em-up (groan) that doesn't look too shabby. The graphics look good but how well the game plays remains to be seen. The other anime title to hit the 3DO is Doraemon and looks great with some really nice graphics set to an arcade adventure game. whether these titles will be released outside of Japan is unknown but with the release of Sailor Moon on American tv, it's



shoot-em-up called Gunner's Heaven that should be turning a few heads on it's release.

The 3DO is starting to become popular in Japan with a couple of anime

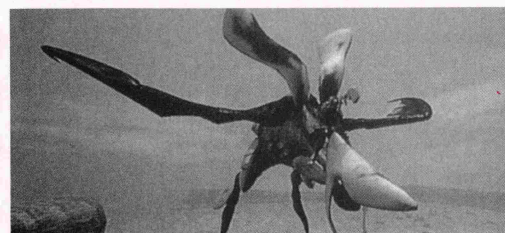
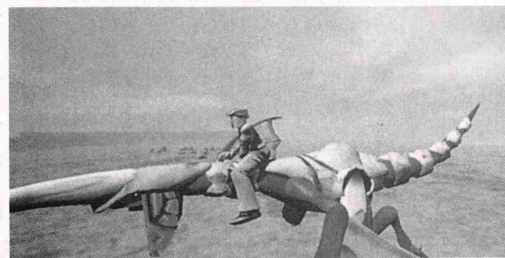
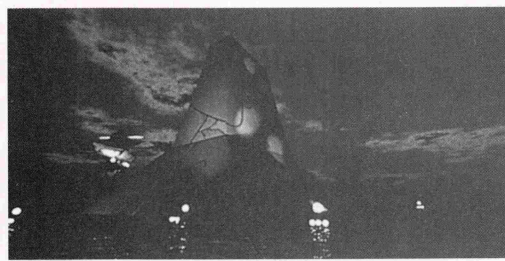
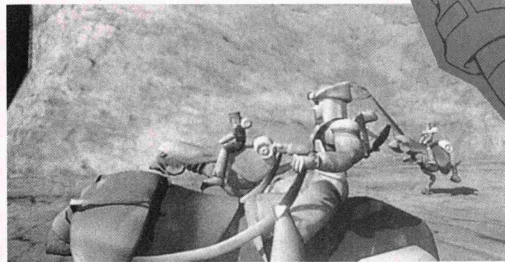
probable that the game may follow.

Back in the world of current consoles, Dragonball Z rears it's head on the SNES once more in the form of an RPG. Based on the early DB series and featuring the young Son Goku, DBZ should be worth a look (if you



can read Japanese!). Banpresto keep up their tradition of SD games with the release of Battle Racers. Incorporating a DSP chip to speed up gameplay the Great Battle team are at it once again, this time in a Mario Kart style racing scenario. Sailor Moon is another anime making the transition from beat-em-up to RPG with the release of Sailor Moon : Another Story. Yet another Yu Yu Hakusho beat-em-up is to be released on the SNES by Namco under the title Yu Yu Hakusho Final. The first game wasn't a bad beat-em-up as Streetfighter clones go but this version seems to have traded the larger sprites for speed. Lastly, we have an RPG for the PC Engine CD Rom based on the rather saucy anime Dragon Knight. What the finished game will be like I have no idea but the screen shots available assured that a fair amount of "Large" girls will be present!

*Well that's all the info for this month so until next time mata ne.*





# INCOMING!

## release roundup

Advance release information from a top industry source

### UK VIDEO JULY 1995

#### ANIME PROJECTS

JUNE 28

**URUSEI YATSURA** TV Vol 5

JULY 31

**URUSEI YATSURA** TV Vol 6

Subtitled mayhem from those obnoxious aliens

**BUBBLE GUM CRISIS** VOL 3 & 4 Dubbed in English

**OH MY GODDESS** VOL 4 Subtitled in English. Belldandy gets a notice of recall! And just when Keiichi thought his life was finally settling down!

#### MANGA ENTERTAINMENT

**LEGEND OF THE 4 KINGS**

episodes 11 & 12. Dubbed in English.

**ORGUSS 02**

**ANGEL COP 3**

**PROJECT A-KO 2** : PLOT OF THE DAITOKUJI FINANCIAL GROUP

Return of the schoolgirl agents of chaos in another wacky adventure

**DOMINION 8**

**SPACE ADVENTURE COBRA**

Buichi Terasawa's Bond-in-space adventure hero finally hits the UK.

#### WESTERN CONNECTION

No releases this month

#### KISEKI FILMS

**ROBOTECH** Vol 6 The classic drama of love, war and cute girl singers.

#### EAST2WEST

**KEKKO KAMEN** VOL 2 The 'sex' end of the promised EAST2WEST mix of 'sex & violence', but intentionally funnier than anything else in its field.

### US VIDEO JUNE 95

#### AD VISION

**CATGIRL NUKU NUKU** VOL 3

Subtitled in English

**DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO 5** : DEATH OF YOHKO Subtitled in English. Cute teenage exorcist Yohko visits 'the other side' and demons prepare to enter our plane of existence. What's a bouncy young demon hunter gonna do?

**DRAGON HALF** episodes 1 & 2 Subtitled in English. An utterly charming, completely wacky tale of a half human half dragon girl who falls in love with a pop singer who just happens to be a dragon hunter!

*Recommended.*

#### ANIMEIGO

**BUBBLE GUM CRISIS** T-SHIRTS - not strictly an anime release, but AnimEigo are releasing a fine line of shirts featuring the Crisis gals - in swimsuits!

**URUSEI YATSURA** TV VOL 16

Subtitled in English. Four more instalments of alien insanity from the pen of Takahashi.

#### MANGA ENTERTAINMENT US

**GIANT ROBO** VOL 2 Dubbed in English. The fight against Big Fire continues!

**NINJA SCROLL** Dubbed in English. Ninja action, intrigue and betrayal. Well animated, fastpaced tale.

**ORGUSS 02** VOL 2 Dubbed in English.

**WINGS OF HONNEAMISE** Dub and subtitled available.

#### PIONEER

**MOLDDIVER** EPISODES 4/5 Dubbed in English

**PHANTOM QUEST** Dubbed in English. Phantom Quest Corp is a ghost hunting organization based in Tokyo. Ayaka Kisaragi and her staff challenge the supernatural! (For more info & pics, see the cover feature in AUK #15.)

**TENCHI MUJO** VOL 4 Dubbed in English. This fun filled series continues with the release of the new TV series episodes. Find out more about Tenchi and the girls!

#### US MANGA CORPS

**AKAI HAYATE** VOL 1 Subtitled in English. A tale of secret societies in feudal Japan, and the obligatory betrayal and redemption.

**GALL FORCE** : EARTH CHAPTER 3 Subtitled in English. The saga of the Gall Force continues, as their fight against the MME war machine escalates.

**LA BLUE GIRL** Subtitled in English. It began centuries ago, when a ninja clan made a deal with the underworld. This led to years of war followed by 600 years of peace. But that's all about to change, as the dwellers in the underworld are about to get a new boss - 18 year old Miko Mido, ninja in training. *Oops. Mature Viewers Only.*

#### VIZ COMMUNICATIONS VIDEO

**RANMA HALF** : CHESTNUTS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE Dubbed in English. Contains two episodes of season two of the TV series. More martial arts mayhem!

**RANMA HALF COLLECTORS EDITION** VOL 4 Subtitled in English. A RANMA fan's idea of heaven. This video contains 3 episodes of the first season of RANMA, subtitled, with extensive liner notes, newsletter, cultural/historical references explained and more!

### MANGA

#### ACADEMY COMICS LTD

**ROBOTECH** : ACADEMY BLUES #1.

Early days of Roy Fokker

**ROBOTECH** : CLONE SPECIAL EDITION #1

**ROBOTECH II** : SENTINELS BOOK III #18

**ROBOTECH** : RETURN TO MACROSS #22.

#### ANTARCTIC PRESS

*This company specialises in 'dojinshi' or non-professional fan Manga, and is well worth a closer look!*

**DODEKAIN** #8 by Masayuki Fujiwara

**GOJIN** #2 by Takizawa and Kondo : aliens invade Earth once more - but this time, it's a look back at an invasion in the 18th century!

**STAINLESS STEEL ARMADILLO** #3 by Ryukihei : a classy magic and mystery series featuring anime babes, sword fights and dragons.

**BONDAGE FAIRIES** GRAPHIC NOVEL by 'Kondom' Very peculiar adults only manga series, featuring the misadventures of Pfil, a young insect hunter. *Mature Readers Only.*

#### CPM COMICS

**MD GEIST** #1 by Tim Eldred/Koichi Ohata/Studio Go! : Geist was engineered to be a weapon of war - but he was just a bit too effective. Back to finish the job he started, his return could mean that everybody loses. Based on the anime.

**PROJECT A-KO II**, #2 by Eldred/Ott/Studio Go! Based on the anime.

#### DARK HORSE COMICS

*You can always be assured of quality releases from this company, and a growing commitment to publishing manga.*

**GUNSMITH CATS** #2 by Kenichi Sonoda : Stylish and fun tale of two gals and their guns by respected artist and chara designer Sonoda. One of this reviewer's faves! *Highly recommended.* (See feature in this issue.)

**GODZILLA** #1 by Stradley etc : Godzilla approaches America! At last a city besides Tokyo will feel the wrath of Godzilla's huge scaly feet!

**LEGEND OF MOTHER SARAH** #3 by Otomo and Nagayasu. The latest from the world renowned creator of AKIRA. *Recommended.*

**OH MY GODDESS!** PART 2 #5 by Kosuke Fujishima. More supermaternal hi-jinks with the hapless Keichii and his houseful of goddesses.

**GHOST IN THE SHELL** #5 by Masamune Shirow. Cyber action with Major Kusanagi, who even fights terrorists on her days off! *Recommended.*

**GODZILLA VS. HERO ZERO** #1 by Eury/Ishida/Miller. The Big G battles one of Dark Horse's superhero charac-

ters in this unusual one shot set around the San Diego comic convention!

#### GRAPHIC VISIONS

*A relatively new company, they tend to specialise in more 'adult' manga and U.S. adaptations of anime.*

**THE S.W.E.E.T. COP** #2 by Kei Amagi. *Mature Readers Only.*

#### VEROTIK

**DEVILMAN** #1 by Go Nagai. At last the adventures of Devilman are available in English in all his demon-killing, uncensored glory. *Mature Readers Only*

#### VIZ COMMUNICATIONS

*The best selection of manga is available from this publisher, with a wide range of genres covered.*

**BATTLE ANGEL ALITA** : KILLING ANGEL GRAPHIC NOVEL by Yukito Kishiro. Collects Book Two of the BATTLE ANGEL adventures, set in the highspeed world of Motorball.

**MAISON IKKOKU** PART 4 #6 by Rumiko Takahashi

**MANGA VIZION** VOL 1 #4 Another manga collection featuring OGRE SLAYER by Kei Kusunoki, SAMURAI CRUSADER by Ryochi Ikegami and INSIDE THE POTTERY by Rumiko Takahashi.

**RETURN OF LUM** #7 by Rumiko Takahashi. Boy meets alien!

**SANCTUARY** PART 3 #7 by Fumimura/Ikegami. The erotically charged tale of political corruption, organised crime and two young men determined to change it all continues.

**X/1999** #2 by CLAMP. Mysterious forces are at work in the first English translation of work by CLAMP. X/1999 - is he Earth's angel of salvation, or the devil of its destruction?

**ANIMERICA** VOL 3 #5 A special look at the 'godfather' of Japanese animation, Osamu Tezuka.

**BATTLE ANGEL ALITA** PART 4 #7 by Yukito Kishiro. Alita's climactic battle with Zapan - one of her most deadly enemies, equipped with the berserker armour that Alita used to possess - can she possibly beat him?

**BIO BOOSTER ARMOUR GUYVER** : REVENGE OF CHRONOS GRAPHIC NOVEL by Yoshiki Takaya. This graphic novel collects the entire second half of part one of the saga of the Guyver!

**MERMAID'S GAZE** #4 by Rumiko Takahashi

**RANMA HALF** PART 4 #6 by Rumiko Takahashi. Ranna finally gets his hands on the magic shampoo that will turn him back into a man permanently. But things have a habit of never going right for Ranna Saotome.

*Recommended.*

**STRIKER** : SECRET OF THE BERSERKER #3 by Takashige and Minegawa. Earth isn't ready for the power of the Berserker - but Yu, the Striker, must try to stop it.



## GREEN LEGEND RAN

Vol 3 - HOLY GREEN  
Pioneer, PIO 10011, 52 mins approx,  
cert 12, English dubbed

The climax of Satoshi Saga's eco-fable seems to offer little hope; man and nature are in conflict, political dissension and religious corruption are endemic and the innocent Aira is threatened. The Archbishop knows the secret of the Holy Mothers, and when Jeke learns it from the old priest he joins forces with Kiba and his extremists to try to destroy the Holy Green.

The selfishness and short-sightedness of the establishment and most authority figures is a well-known anime cliché, but here it is used to good effect as contrast to the selflessness of the children Ran and Aira. Aira is willing to give up her own life and let herself be absorbed into the Holy Mother so that the Earth will be green again, and despite his longing to keep her with him Ran accepts that she has the right to decide her own destiny.

But innocence is not always the right basis for decisions that affect the fate of the Earth; the meek will only inherit if someone makes sure there's something left for them. The alien Holy Mothers do intend to re-green the world, but the dominance of green is to be total - only plant life will remain, absorbing all of humankind. Though Kiba's methods may be wrong his actions turn out to be right, and he atones for many past crimes by his final sacrifice. Ran and Aira survive to make their way in the new world. The final shots show footprints in the sand, walking from the sea into the future. Human life has another chance on the planet. This episode is perhaps a little longer than it needs to be, but charmingly animated and scored, with a message that children will absorb and adults should ponder. How many chances will we get?

RORY DONNELLY

## KISHIN HEIDAN

Vol 1 - PIO 1009, 60 mins,  
Vol 2 - PIO 10010, 2 x 30 min  
Pioneer, both cert 12, English dubbed

The fourth UK release from this thoroughbred Japanese label is a giant robot story in the 'retro' mood of the 90s, harking back both in its time-frame and its designs to an earlier period. It's set in 1941, but an alternate 1941 which never occurred in this dimension. Just before World War II, a struggle is going on between humans and aliens. Kishin Corps has been formed to help defend mankind, and using captured alien technology they have built a weapon to help the fight. But the bad guys are using the same secrets themselves to build a machine of their own and use it to dominate Asia. Add a spunky kid whose father entrusts him with the technological secrets that will enable the baddies to fulfil their aims, twin sisters Maria and Eva Braun (and no prizes for guessing which is the evil twin!), car chases straight out of DICK TRACY and the most loveable mecha since TETSUJIN 28-GO, and you have a sure-fire winner.

The pedigree is good - Takashi Ishiyama directs Masaki Yamada's story, chara designer Masayuki Goto of GUNDAM F91 and MACROSS PLUS creates the people, and the SILENT MOBIUS pairing of mecha-man and conceptualist Kenji Yamazaki and music director Kaoru

Wada help create the look and atmosphere of the alternative 1940s. The world they create is completely convincing; like the old Saturday matinees, this is a compelling adventure tale with a heart - no moral ambiguity, no uncertainty and no hesitation, just action and excitement all the way. Despite the 12 certificate this is perfectly suitable for younger kids with sensible parental supervision, and it would be a shame to deprive them of the kind of fun that's been in short supply at the cinema and on TV for - oh, about forty years. Give them a matinee treat.

RORY DONNELLY

## STAR BLAZERS

THE QUEST FOR ISCANDAR, PART 6  
Kiseki Films, KIS 93032, cert U  
English dubbed

The final episodes of the Argo's long quest will resolve many questions. Despite the U certificate, this is a complex and touching story, though its 'retro' look is the real thing and the animation is far behind the times. The STARBLAZERS saga continues in two more parts - THE BOLAR WARS and THE COMET EMPIRE; it's to be hoped that Kiseki have done well enough on sales to bring these to the UK as well. Classics may date, but they're always worth seeing.

HELEN MCCARTHY

## 8 MAN AFTER

Vol 1, City in Fear  
East2West Films, 55 mins approx,  
cert 18 (TBC), English dubbed

ROBOCOP was based on a very old idea. The manga EIGHT MAN, about a murdered cop whose brain survived in an android body to fight for justice, was written back in the 60s and became a classic among early anime TV series. Then came the 90s, the passion for remakes of classic anime, and 8 MAN AFTER.

The original EIGHT MAN disappeared and was presumed dead, though no body was ever found. When private eye Hazuma is seriously injured while on the trail of a stolen consignment of psychoweapons and drugs, a mysterious professor transforms him into a new '8 MAN'. Able to call up a cybershell, move at lightspeed and use an awesome armoury of weapons, Hazuma gets back on the trail of the criminal mastermind. With plenty of gore, guts and urban decay, this should keep the action fans happy, but there's a plot in there too for those who like something a bit more demanding. The Streamline Pictures dub has been hailed as an excellent one; I don't think I'd go quite that far but it certainly keeps up with most of the UK industry offerings and outstrips quite a few. If the craze for kicking comic characters into the live-action cinema goes on, Sly could be very comfortable as Hazuma.

RORY DONNELLY

## KEKKO KAMEN

Parts 1 and 2  
East2West Films, 45 mins approx,  
cert 18.

From the Go Nagai stable at Dynamic Production, this tale of a masked avenger fighting injustice and defending the helpless undoubtedly has its roots in the KAMEN RIDER characters created by Shotaro Ishinomori; but Kekko Kamen herself could only have come from the mind of Go Nagai himself. A masked

avenger who conceals her identity by wearing nothing BUT a mask? Who always manages to produce nunchakus from heaven alone knows where? Whose killer blow is a thigh-grip round her victim's neck which never fails to elicit a strangled but happy 'Thank you, Kekko-chan'? Well, it's sure as hell not Miyazaki, is it? There's a fundamental innocence about Go Nagai's work. All the evils of his world come from greed and hypocrisy; sex is an entirely normal and happy function until it's degraded and perverted by those of evil intent. KEKKO KAMEN takes this to its logical conclusion. At a school where students are terrorised and tortured by the staff, she uses the power of love, justice and the undoubtedly arresting sight of her nude body to defend those who can't defend themselves. A glorious romp in which camp, slapstick and revered anime concepts are cheerfully geyed, this is one of the very small class of *intentionally* hilarious 'naughty videos', and it succeeds as magnificently as its heroine. Jonathan Clements' translation is excellent, though at the time of writing the dub isn't complete so it may not survive intact; in particular, the translation of the ending song, written by Go Nagai himself, preserves the spirit of the original perfectly. The dub itself will be almost irrelevant - it would be difficult to destroy the innate humour of KEKKO KAMEN however well or badly the actors work. To be avoided by the easily offended and enjoyed by everyone else.

HELEN MCCARTHY

## GODZILLA VS KING GHIDORAH

103 min approx, PG, dubbed, Manga  
Video MANL1002

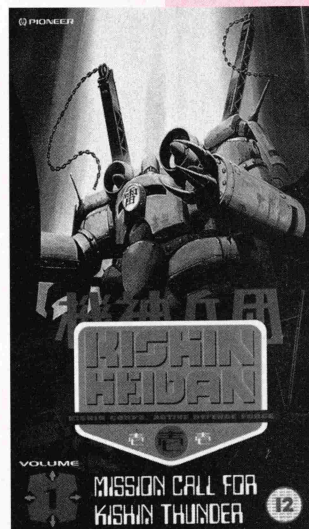
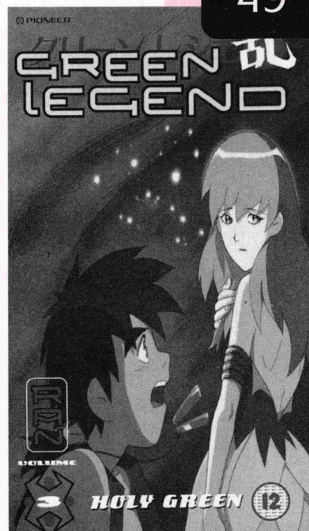
## GODZILLA VS MOTHRA

102 min approx, PG, dubbed, Manga  
Video MANL1003

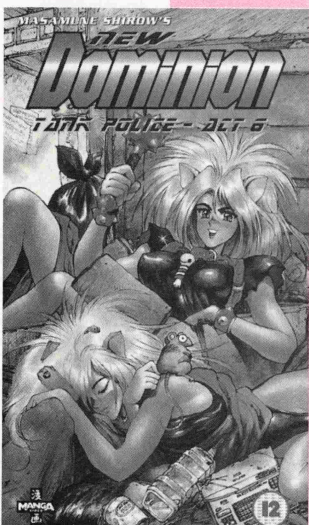
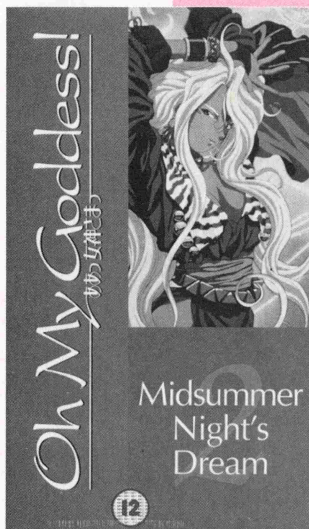
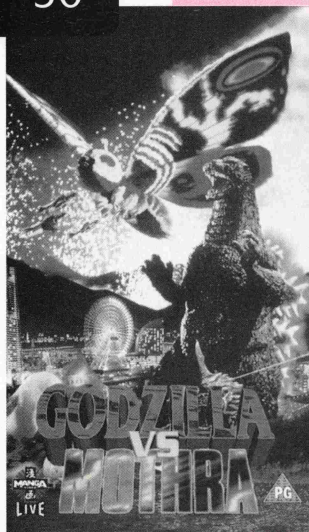
Monsters and mankind make uneasy bedfellows. A part from their tendency to eat you, stomp on you or make entertaining exist from various bits of your body, monsters tend to act the socks off anyone stupid enough to share the screen with them. "Never act with children and animals" obviously includes giant radioactive lizards, since Godzilla movies are no exception to this rule. Usually the guys in the monster suits manage to convey more character and emotion through the layers of latex than all the 'human' cast combined, but entertaining though monster mayhem is, we need some human interest to offset it - people we care enough about to hope they won't get squished. Sadly, we usually wind up hoping for exactly the opposite.

Both these films suffer when the monsters are offscreen, and so do we. Painful 'homages' to THE TERMINATOR and Indiana Jones waste valuable time and patience. A pity, really, since GODZILLA VS KING GHIDORAH has an interesting plotm idea - nasty Caucasians from the future attempt to undo Japan's 23rd century world dominance by changing history, preventing Godzilla's 'birth' and using Ghidorah to crush those uppity Nips. A chance to taken a look at the serious problem of 'Japan-bashing' in an entertaining context is blown by poor plot construction and pacing as heavy as Godzilla himself.

However, once the action starts, it's worth the wait. The new Godzilla suit looks excellent, though poor







Ghidorah looks as awkward as ever. Revamped into Mecha-Ghidorah he's much more fun and wonderful pyrotechnics abound. GODZILLA VS MOTHRA is much better paced, and though the story has less potential it's a more enjoyable film overall. Mothra itself was always unconvincing but BATTARA (BATTLE Mothra) is a pleasingly mean and spiky addition to Toho's kaiju\* canon. A mythological/ecological tale is nicely balanced with wanton destruction on an epic scale.

Dubbing on both films is uncredited (I suspect Toho did it themselves some dialogue has a very Japanese politeness!) and is good but not outstanding. Long-time G-fans will utter a nostalgic sigh at the long overdue return of Akira Ifukube's classic themes on the soundtracks.

So, flawed but fun. I certainly hope they'll sell well enough to warrant sequels. However, here we could hit problems. Already we have started their releases with the next in the series, GODZILLA VS BIOLLANTE, but for reasons best known to them, they've skipped over this to the next two in line.

Since continuity plays a bigger role in this new cycle, jumping about causes problems. Already we have Biollante mentioned in the GHIDORAH movie, which means nothing if you haven't seen the earlier film. Regular psychic heroine MIKI SAEGUSA is also introduced in BIOLLANTE, and remains of the creature itself (one of Godzilla's most impressive opponents, incidentally) help form the latest menace: SPACE GODZILLA. Likewise, future technology gleaned from the defeated Mecha-Ghidorah is employed in later films to create new AntiGodzilla weapons: first MechaGodzilla, then MOGERA. So, hopefully, Manga will rectify this omission and keep the rest in chronological order, or things could get confusing!

STEVE KYTE

**BUBBLE GUM CRISIS** Episode 1, English dub  
Anime Projects, AP095-003, 53 min, cert PG

There's nothing to say about BGC that hasn't already been said in large type superlatives several times over. It's an essential classic of 80s anime, a rattling good story and the apotheosis of the girls'n'guns genre. The only thing that has held it back from wider success in the Western market is the absence of a good English dubbed version. It is an unfashionable view in fandom, but remains true nonetheless, that mass market success doesn't come with subtitles, and to everyone who quotes the relatively wide sales of foreign language art-house films one has to reply that those who enjoy THE SEVENTH SEAL are not necessarily the target audience for BUBBLE GUM CRISIS. All this, however, is irrelevant. Those who hate dubs aren't reading this review; the rest of you want to know if this dub is any good. Well, yes, it is. I have my quibbles with it - notably with the choice of voice actresses for Nene and Linna, who both sound much too old for their roles - but the translation is to

AnimEigo's usual high standard and the acting and directing carry conviction. My biggest problem is with a sound mix which is so unbalanced that not only the non-vocal effects but the music track drops back behind the voices until it's almost lost, and the band sounds quiet and small. There's none of the ambience and immediacy of heavy rock sound. For another title this might not matter; for BUBBLE GUM CRISIS, whose driving score is almost a character in its own right, it's almost a disaster. It's nothing short of tragic that so brave an effort should be disabled by something as basic as the mixing levels, but without a better balanced soundmix, the music is only a pale echo; and without the music, it just isn't BUBBLE GUM CRISIS. Buy it as an example of good dubbing and so that those who just won't read subtitled can enjoy a classic, but don't judge the score by this mix.

HELEN MCCARTHY

**OH MY GODDESS** episode 2 - MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM  
Anime Projects, AP095-004, 29 min, cert 12

Belldandy is still being thoroughly wet. She spends most of this video being sweet to Keiichi and the rest apologising for things that aren't her fault. Keiichi is also still being thoroughly wet, wanting desperately to get a hold of Belldandy but completely unable even to get a hold of himself. Both end up thoroughly wet when they fall out of a boat at the seaside. But at least, by the end of the episode, they ARE holding hands... I hate to sound like an old curmudgeon, but Belldandy's sweet compliance is starting to get on my nerves. Urd, however, is a different ballgame - upfront, interfering and as audacious as she's curvaceous, so maybe things will get livelier in future episodes! This OAV takes prettiness to a new level with a summery, shimmery episode, perfectly lit and designed to remind you of all those endless long school holidays and teenage dreams of romance in the sun. The music is pleasant, the designs stunning and the pacing and direction perfect for the subject. When I wasn't admiring the truly magical techniques, I was bored, but then I can't get excited about the vapid teen romances in NEIGHBOURS either. So this is probably one for teen romantics, not old curmudgeons like me.

RORY DONNELLY

**PATLABOR THE MOVIE**  
Manga Video, 94mins, cert tba

One of the few UK releases worthy of the name, Patlabor the Movie is a real big-screen feature, full of twisty plot and crisp animation, Patlabor is a near-future techno-thriller with a time-ticking-away sting in its tail that rivals much of the live-action material around at the moment. The former LA Hero dub is of a uniformly good standard, despite some underacting, and the translation works hard to make the technobabble intelligible. The background is this; a few of years from now, developing technology ushers in a new age of building and human endeavour, thanks to the creation of Labors, giant piloted robots capable of mammoth construction tasks, as well as military uses... But technology can be abused, and so police forces begin to use their own labors for law-enforcement. These are known as Patrol

Labors, or Patlabors. Tokyo's Special Vehicle Division No. 2 are just such a police force, a team of rag-tag misfits slung together in a posting the regular cops regard as a dead-end. Like Hill Street Blues crossed with Robotech, Patlabor is as much, if not more, about the personalities of the cast as it is about the keen mecha. And herein lies the rub. The movie is great - as I said above, terrific story, neat animation and a whacking good action climax, but to folks coming to it for the first time it's going to be at best a bit slow and at worst tedious. To explain; imagine seeing a Star Trek movie without ever having watched the tv series. Sure, you'll get the main thrust of the plot, but if you don't watch the show most of the character interaction will be lost to you - unless you know the subtle nuances (why Shinshi's worried about his wife, what the significance of Alphonse is, why everyone puts up with Goto's manipulations, etc, etc.) you'll miss a goodly deal of entertainment and feel cheated. In Japan, Patlabor began life as a best-selling manga, went to OAVs, then leapt onto television (the first OAV even to do that), back to OAVs and then into two theatrical features... Everyone there knew what to expect, and got all the gags. Here, only hard-core fans have that advantage. Don't get me wrong, Patlabor the Movie is a great flick and I give it a hearty recommendation to SF, Thriller and Mecha fans... But I can't help thinking that Manga Video might have a got a better response for this and its upcoming sequel if they had released some of the OAVs first.

JIM SWALLOW

**THE LEGEND OF THE 4 KINGS**  
Chapters 7 & 8  
MANV1076  
Cert 12  
£13.99, 90 min

Another two episodes of scheming madmen (complete with evil heckling laughs), cyborgs in fox masks, stone faced androids, quite a few helicopters and even more tanks. No new dragon sightings though; so fans of mass collateral damage will be disappointed (as were the bad guys). On the upside, there are plenty of fights - with the characteristic audacity that has to be the fingerprint of '4 Kings', the reappearance of Patricia Lansdale and some nice touches of humour. Unfortunately the plot doesn't exactly advance much. OK, so the bad guys reveal some hardware, tell us a little more about their reasons for wanting dragons on the loose and we discover that the Japanese army prefers tanks to have air conditioning rather than armour plating. But it's more of the same; 'So we have four guys who can become dragons - let's get them to transform and incidentally do our bidding by shooting, stapling, freezing, incinerating them etc.' Either I'm getting used to the voice acting or it's improved slightly since episode 1. But it's not all good news. The script is still very laborious as it pushes its points across. Though it's pleasing to report that there are no annoying voice overs on this tape. Overall then episodes seven and eight let us see the four brothers in action again and hints at some action to come. Suitable for Legend of the 4 Kings fans only.

ROBERT LYN DAVIES



## ANGEL COP 1

Manga Video 30min

If nothing else, Manga have got an extremely topical release on their hands in the form of Angel Cop: the basic premise of a Japan threatened by terrorism smacks unpleasantly of the real world. Anyone who watches anime to escape will be onto a loser with this.

Let's hope Japan's response to its problems will be a little less draconian than shown here. In Angel Cop, the danger of political and financial terrorism - personified by an extreme left-wing group called the Red May - has prompted the authorities to form the Special Security Force, a licensed-to-kill team of specialists including Hacker, a muscle-bound computer expert; the cute and ill-named Peace; and leader Raiden, a young but competent agent with the nasty habit of wearing a leather jacket and no shirt. Together with the gun-loving Angel, the SSF take on the bad guys in a story that starts off simple, and ends up a good deal more complex than anticipated.

Like Dominion, Angel Cop is a series of six half-hour OAV's on a police theme, but there the similarity ends: Angel's idea of disarming someone with a knife is to shoot them until their head bursts. The character designs (by Battle Angel's Nobuteru Yuuki) are angular and realistic, and while the script and voice acting aren't brilliant, on the whole they're not all that bad either. So if you like to hear the brass hit the floor (and the brains hit the wall), add Angel Cop to your collection.

PETER J EVANS

## NEW DOMINION

Tank Police - Act 6  
Manga Video 30min

It's something every feisty police officer has to do at some time in their career - find a cause, hurl their badge down on the chief's desk and storm off to play vigilante for a couple of days. Leona Ozaki gets her turn when an old friend of hers, a motorcycle cop called Sharon Isahara, turns up in the Newport City morgue after being bumped off in a car park. Warned off the case, Leona abandons her beloved Bonaparte and goes in search of the crime's only witnesses - Anna and Uni, the Puma twins. A shouting match with the twins and a little help from Al back at headquarters soon has Leona suspecting the Dainihon Giken Corporation, a shadowy Genom-clone (complete with wannabe Quincy) whose employment procedures include kidnapping and enforced brain surgery. However, it seems that the megacorp is as interested in her as she is in them, and before long anime's own Tank Girl is Sharon's replacement on the operating table...

Like all six OAV's in the New Dominion series, Act 6 stands alone to an extent, but any explanations as to what is going on will have to wait until the end. The artwork and character designs are still the high points of the show (although Anna and Uni seem to have gotten a lot younger and thinner since the beginning), while the dubbing and script score low enough to reduce the enjoyment of the whole. There's not a lot of tank stuff, either. Buy it if you're collecting the set, but don't expect wonders.

PETER J EVANS

John Woo was making films a long time before A Better Tomorrow, and from 1976 comes kung fu actioner **HAND OF DEATH** (HK Classics, cert 15, 100m, dub, full screen, V3427). This is an extremely interesting release, although not a particularly good film - it's a fairly routine historical kung fu epic, the dubbing is pretty pedestrian, and the picture is pan and scan - in an action film, this can be very disconcerting as much of the action occurs outside the screen. However, not only does it feature early (non-firearm) Woo, and action supremo Sammo Hung, but also pre-superstar Jackie Chan. The story concerns the quest of a Shaolin monk ('Flash Legs' Tan - zero screen presence, but talented footwork) for revenge against a traitorous monk; and has echoes of both A Fistful of Dollars and The Magnificent Seven (themselves both inspired by Kurosawa films - global culture, anyone?). All the elements are there, but they just don't jell together into a coherent whole. However, that said, this is a 'must get' for the glimpses it gives of Woo's embryonic genius, and an undiscovered Jackie Chan - plus there are some terrific martial arts sequences featuring fists, spears, and swords, and Sammo Hung is always worth watching.

Two years later, in 1978, after several years trying to be a conventional hero, Jackie Chan was finally given his chance to shine, in **SNAKE IN THE EAGLE'S SHADOW**, (MIHK, cert 15, 90min, dubbed widescreen), which managed to reinvent the kung fu film by utilising its potential for physical comedy. While a superb martial artist, Chan had always lacked the commanding screen presence of Bruce Lee; although he does have an 'everyman' quality that makes him a more accessible film star, and a flair for comedic timing that is almost unique. The story concerns the lethal rivalry between the Eagle Claw and Snake Fist schools of kung fu - the last Snake master is in hiding after everyone else has been killed. Chan plays a 'Cinderella' type servant at a Kung Fu school, regularly abused and forced to perform menial tasks, until he meets the master who teaches him Snake secrets - eventually he is forced to add something of his own (a 'Cat's Paw') in order to finally defeat the Eagle villain. By bringing humour into martial arts but still retaining a high level of skill, Chan was able to make a more enjoyable film - attracting a whole new audience without alienating traditional kung fu fans. The film was extremely successful, and was followed immediately by **DRUNKEN MASTER** (also available and well worth a look) which broke box office records and ensured the superstar status he still enjoys today.

And speaking of today; getting a welcome release (RENTAL ONLY) is **CITY HUNTER**, (20.20 Vision, cert 12, 92min, dub, full screen, NVT22528), based on the long running manga and anime series of the same name - although after a brief introduction to set the scene, the films heads off on its own. The dub's not bad, but it is a shame it's not widescreen. Chan plays Ryo Saeba, a 'private detective' hired to find a runaway Japanese heiress, who he eventually tracks down on a cruise ship, about to be hijacked by international terrorists lead by a suitably menacing Mac Donald (played by Aussie Richard Norton). The story, however, is largely irrelevant, serving merely as links for a series of stunning set pieces. This film really does have everything - from a deranged Jackie playing Chun Li in a hallucinatory Streetfighter II; to a fight in a cinema where he takes tips from the on-screen Bruce Lee; from

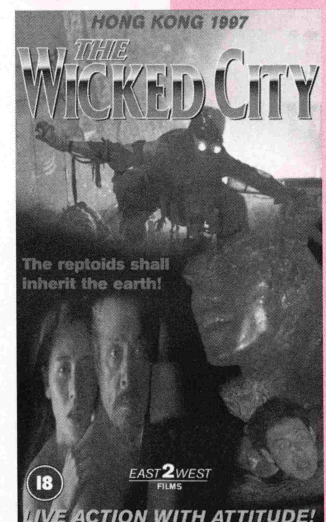
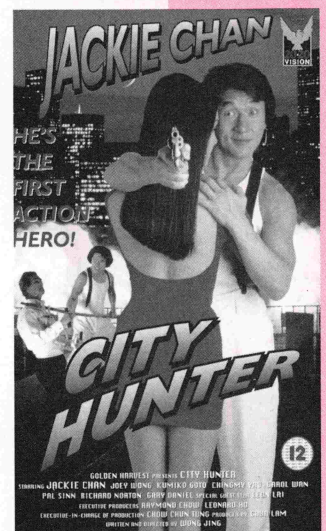
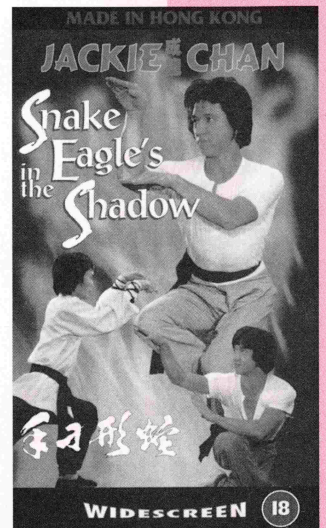
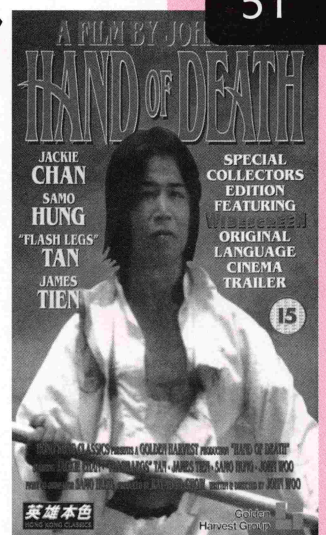
# LIVE KICKING

by  
JOHN  
SPENCER

policewoman Saeko toting a small (okay, large!) arsenal of firearms; to a charismatic card sharp, a manic rap band, and even British actor Gary Daniels as an athletic psychopath. This is a film you can watch over and over again and shows that, not just a martial arts master or a comic genius, Jackie knows how to make it all work on film - an underrated achievement when you think of all the people who haven't been able to manage it...

**THE WICKED CITY**, (East2West, cert 18, 90min, dub), is the first live action release from new kids on the block East2West and is a fast and furious gore fest from Hong Kong. The opening will be familiar to fans of the animated Wicked City, but thereafter it heads off to realms of its own deranged imagination. A combination of 50's B-movie with 90's style, it freely mixes horror, fantasy and science fiction to create a visually stunning tour de force, not for the faint hearted. Ken is a cop with the Anti-Reptoid Bureau and his partner Taki is half reptoid/half human (with all the problems that entails). Replacing the usual Hong Kong drug lord is an evil Reptoid, presumably from another dimension - one of the film's strengths is that it doesn't bother explaining too much, recognising such exposition as spurious anyway - consequently the plot hovers on the verge of incomprehensibility, although with a subsequent gain in plausibility (in these days of conspiracy theories, does anyone *really* know what's going on in real life?). He/It plans to take over the Earth using an addictive drug called Happiness. Resisting him is a 'good' Reptoid who wants peace love and understanding, his daughter (who's in love with Ken), and the combined psychic powers of the Anti-Raptor Bureau (always assuming they don't have a double agent in their midst...). Assorted other nasties also roam around, including a liquid Reptoid (be careful what you drink!) and a nymphomaniac pinball machine (don't ask...). In spite of an idiosyncratic Hong Kong dub, this is a strong first release which deserves to be successful.

Art House label ICA Projects has released two movies from maverick Japanese director Seijun Suzuki. **TOKYO DRIFTER**, (ICAV 1015, 85m cert 12 £13.99 sub widescreen) was made in 1966, one of the last movies he made before being sacked by the studio. Its hero is Tetsu, a Yakuza gangster who, together with his old boss, are trying to go straight. But it's not easy, and they are drawn relentlessly back into a spiralling web of corruption and betrayal. Suzuki doesn't make much effort to make the plot comprehensible but concentrates on the visuals - the photography, composition and use of colour is inspired, together with incongruous use of bluesy songs, (pre-dating The Singing Detective by decades). Tetsu is a loner, fed up with the system and desperate to escape - not unlike the situation the director was in, after years making formula films for the studio, and a strong air of 60's cynicism for establishment values permeates the movie as the hero struggles through the labyrinth of conflicting gangster groups in a series of almost random encounters. At times it seems like anywhere he goes is a new bunch of assassins out to get him, culminating in... but I'll leave you to find that out.





# Sing Japanese

Someone up there in Tokyo must have a sixth sense, because Japan Rocks has only been running in this magazine for a few months when, out of the blue, *Sing Japanese* drops onto the AUK in-tray. This book is an excellent introduction to the world of Japanese pop music, a fabulous karaoke crammer, an informative grammar book, and, surprisingly, a bargain at £19.99. That may seem a little steep, but the contents are truly worth the investment. For your money, you get a tape of eleven Japanese pop songs and a 160-page guide, which not only teaches you how to sing the songs included, but teaches you a fairly impressive chunk of Japanese as well. All in a snazzy little box.

This is particularly welcome to yours truly, for whom Japanese songs provided a major impetus to study the language, and whose interest was kept alive during the lean times by each new ditty that drifted out of the Tokyo recording studios. But this book is more than a 'greatest hits' album for the Japanese teeny-bop scene, it has a very strong educational value. Author Peter Tse, whose last book

Bit by bit, all the songs worked their way into my head, and I found that I just couldn't put it down for a moment. And what better way to make sure you keep learning?

I cannot fault the choice of songs in *Sing Japanese*; they are a realistic reflection both of popular Japanese tunes, and, by extension, what is most likely to turn up on a karaoke playlist. This means, of course, that they are the sort of stuff that tends to get into the top ten in any country, and those hoping for something dangerous, controversial, musically innovative or offensive might be disappointed. Then again, you won't find those things on a karaoke machine either, and you won't win any friends in a Japanese bar if you try and sing "Satan's Triumphal Return". So these songs are exactly the sort of stuff that goes down well with the Japanese general public, and regular readers of Japan Rocks

will know what that means.

Three of them are direct tie-ins with TV or films,

that opens Ushio & Tora. But such a project would require the first book to be a success, so let's hope it does as well as it deserves.

The eleven songs included would represent a relatively comprehensive salvo of karaoke ammunition for all occasions. They range from the soppy, like the Southern All Stars' "My Dear Eri", and Tsuyoshi Nagabuchi's valedictory "Kampai" to heart-rending weepies like Akiko Kosaka's "Anata" and Yuzaki Otaka's "I love you". I'm sure that there is something for everyone in here; my number one from this first volume

would have to be the

Southern



told us all about Kansai Japanese, has teamed up with Saigo Nakazawa to produce English translations of the songs, romanised sing-along sheets, explanations of kanji and difficult constructions, tests to check that you're paying attention and a final 'solo' section which challenges you to sing along with only the Japanese characters for reference. This is no short-term curiosity, the book is a genuine teaching aid for Japanese, and as such will be more rewarding for those who are trying to learn the language. Those people will find, fun aside, that they are really being pushed to the limit, and also picking up some real gems of modern Japanese.

The real attraction of *Sing Japanese* is that it is insidiously enjoyable. You can buy combination tapes and study books for most languages these days, and they all cost about the same. But you are rarely tempted to stick Routledge's Colloquial Serbo-Croat into the Walkman when you head off down to the shops. *Sing Japanese*, however, is such great fun that I found myself listening to it in just such a situation, and was then dragged back to the companion book to look up this word or that singer.

and several others lean heavily on the singer's success in other media. The gender division is a little uneven, with only four female songs against seven from male artists. There's also no provision for duets; the writers have obviously decided to lay the emphasis on solo study, and they have given themselves plenty of room to grow in further volumes. *Sing Japanese* is clearly intended to be the first in a series, and the authors are open to suggestion about future inclusion. Apart from including a few of my personal favourites, like Seikima-II's "Bad Again", I think they could do a lot worse than planning some thematic volumes: an enka special, a book of children's songs, and, just maybe, a book of famous songs lifted from anime. That's something that might be more likely to shift in the current UK market, as anime fans rush to discover exactly what 'Wandabadaba dabadattadatta' means, and how to break it down and use it in sentences(!). There are plenty of cracking anime tunes that would make for a great *Sing Japanese* special, from the downright silly "Let's Put Weird and Weird Together" that closes Urusei Yatsura to the rip-roaring "Fighter of Bravery"

All Stars' "Midsummer Fruit", but there are no duds on this album at all. It's a small shame that we don't have the original singers on the tape, but the reproduction rights were probably too prohibitive even for Kodansha. And since it's not unknown to have to pay £20 for a Japanese album on its own, few people interested in buying this book would be put off by the price.

It has to be said that although *Sing Japanese* would be interesting and rewarding even for someone with no knowledge of Japanese, the text of the accompanying book already assumes some knowledge of the language. This knowledge is a bit difficult to define, but at a guess you would have to know the hiragana syllabary pretty well, and be keen enough on subtitled anime to have worked your way through several sets of AnimEigo liner notes. If that describes you, I cannot recommend *Sing Japanese* enough, since this tiny book may do more to keep your interest and keep you learning than half a ton of dry textbooks.

JONATHAN CLEMENTS

*Sing Japanese*, by Peter Tse and Seigo Nakazawa. Kodansha International. ISBN 4-7700-1866-5. £19.99.



## WHY AREN'T THERE MORE FEMALES IN ANIME FANDOM ... AND WILL IT MATTER ONCE SAILOR MOON HITS THE AIRWAVES?

*Helen McCarthy speculates on one of fandom's perennial questions.*

Josh Clark of GAI-JIN PRESS asked me to write something about the first part of this vexed question for his zine ANIMENIA just after I got back from a flying visit to the USA, where female fans are more prevalent, but still not proportional to the number of males. Our conversation started me thinking about two recent letters in American zines. There are a lot of issues involved, and I think the topic is of wide enough interest to bear repeating some of my thoughts in ANIME UK.

One of those two published letters, signed only 'Jane Doe', was from a girl who loved shonen ai anime and manga, but didn't know any other female fans locally, and didn't think she could share her interest with her boyfriend because he'd go crazy if he knew she liked stories about 'boys love'. She used the pseudonym for her letter so that he wouldn't see her name in the magazine, so presumably he was an anime fan. The other letter was from a girl who had found and enjoyed anime and manga, but pointed out that since in her area it was only stocked in specialist stores and her local comic and sf shops looked like very unsavoury places, she could see why many women didn't bother.

Obviously this discussion only applies to Western fandom, and probably only to the English-speaking world at that. Japanese fandom has plenty of female fans, and they don't seem to be absent from French and Italian fandom either. However these countries have anime on TV as well as on video and there is publishing and merchandising support.

Both those American letters give us some pointers. One might say 'well, if girls are too wimpish to stand up to their boyfriends or go into scary places we don't want them as fans anyway', but that rather defeats the object of this exercise, doesn't it? If we don't get more females of every kind in fandom, the chance of finding female fans of the kind each of us individually might find likeable and good company is reduced; so let's pick up on every lead we can find, tenuous as it might seem. One obvious thing that emerges from both letters, and

many conversations I've had, is that many women and girls are comfortable with the company of other females and uncomfortable in situations where they're the only female in a group of unfamiliar males. Most women will probably have experienced the situation where you go along to a largely male gathering with your boyfriend and spend the evening being either ogled, ignored or talked down to.

There's also the idea that some women like some anime which

makes some men uncomfortable, shonen ai being a case in point. It's funny how right-on guys who are really into cute and praise TENCHI to the skies find a pressing reason to leave the room when you get to the heavier bits of AI NO KUSUBE, even though there's nothing too explicit onscreen...

But the root of the problem is, I think, one of presentation. At present in the English-speaking West, anime and manga are for the most part aimed, marketed and promoted

for teenage boys and young men. Where are the anime ads in JUST SEVENTEEN and BARBIE and CHAT? And why isn't anime like SLOW STEP and MOLDDIVER sold next to the exercise videos in HMV and Woolies, in dump bins in the makeup and accessory departments of Boots, on racks by the escalators on the clothing floors of big stores, in book departments next to the romance paperbacks, in TAMMY GIRL and C & A and supermarkets and the places girls and women actually go every day? Girls read

more than boys, yet the opportunity to cross-promote anime and manga in books and magazines for girls is completely neglected. Girls love long, complex stories and detailed character development, yet very little anime and manga advertising highlights these qualities in the material available in the English-speaking world. If you want to open up new markets, then you have to break new ground in marketing.

But the day of the female fan is coming, and when it arrives it will change the anime and manga scene in ways we have only just started to imagine. This autumn, SAILOR MOON and MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH are both slated for TV syndication in the USA. SAILOR MOON at least is already undergoing a POWER RANGERS style transformation into a form more 'suitable' for the US market; but just like POWER RANGERS - and just like BATTLE OF THE PLANETS before that - however much it is hacked and slashed it will still have its own strange, subversive charms. And it will be on the box. No comic shops to find. No sexual ghettos to brave. No ads in arcane magazines to rely on for information. It will be sold, when it makes the leap to Western video, in Woolworths and Smiths and all those other safe and infinitely accessible venues. If it succeeds, more of that readily-available, relatively cheap anime TV programming for kids will find its way to the cost-conscious, programme-hungry West, changing the face of fandom as we know it, maybe even achieving the aim Jim McLennan stated so beautifully at a con a couple of years back - of making anime so commonplace, so widely accepted in the market, that the term 'anime fandom' becomes obsolete.

The market, and fandom, has had its chance to invite the opposite sex into anime on its existing terms. Now, the rules are changing. The girlie invasion is coming and it will make its own way on its own terms. Don't say you haven't been warned.



# SOAP

# BOX



# animail

We want your input! Write to Animate - Anime UK Magazine - 3rd Floor - 70 Mortimer Street - London W1N 7DF - England

Dear Helen,

Did anyone out there video the Masquerade at D-CONTANIMET? If so, could they please contact me? I'd be most grateful, as I really enjoyed taking part, but got to see virtually none of the other competitors due to shortsightedness!

**DAVE ROSS**, 124 Reading Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 4SG, UK.

*HELEN : I don't know of anyone who videoed the contest but if anyone out there does, please help the victorious Alberto to see the rest of the contestants!*

Dear ANIME UK,

A question : when you ask for only black and white pictures to be sent in, does that mean you can print graduated greys, or just line art/screentones?

The new look is excellent and the new price isn't bad either. Keep up the good work.

**NICK SOUTHAM**, Huntingdon, Cambs., UK

*HELEN : We can handle all forms of black ink and tone work, either line or wash. However one big problem with wash, especially in the work of less experienced artists, is that it often comes out very 'muddy' or loses fine detail; this can make reduction to the kind of size we usually print at very difficult. We want your work to look its best in our pages, and if reducing makes it look bad we won't use it. If you want your work to have the best possible chance of being printed, it makes sense to make it as easy as possible to reproduce at any scale.*

Dear Helen,

I was a little disappointed by the arguments as to what constitutes cyberpunk or not. Peter Evans, Dave Ross and Michael Minott all seem to be missing the point. Cyberpunk is simply a word used in connection with the fusion of flesh and metal, the integration of both man and machine. Indeed, the term 'cyber' is a derivative of the word 'cyborg' which is, as we know, living tissue and mecha.

Dave Ross's point that cyberpunk is more style over substance is wrong. True, much of the cyberpunk found in both novels and film tends to inhabit a cynical, degenerating near future, but that in itself is not what defines cyber or cyberpunk. Yes, it's distinctive and oozes style, but that does not in itself cyberpunk make. What does set the likes of William Gibson's NEUROMANCER apart from the works of Chandler or Fuller is

Gibson's vision of man and machine as one. Similarly, what differentiates BLADERUNNER from the likes of THE MALTESE FALCON is the former's interest in artificially created humans. If you were to strip BLADERUNNER of the Replicants you would have two noir detective stories inhabiting similar dark and cynical worlds, even if one is set in the year 2019. It is this fusion of man and machine that singles out movies such as TERMINATOR, ROBOCOP and ALIEN as cyberpunk and 2001 as not.

Of course, I'm not saying that these movies' preoccupation with the breakdown of society in the near future is not part of it, but that it isn't required for cyberpunk to exist. The very first example of a 'cyber' I can remember seeing was named STEVE AUSTIN and cost six million dollars. he didn't inhabit the future and nor did Lindsay Wagner's BIONIC WOMAN. In fact, in the real world we are beginning to see the first examples of cybers. Those with artificial limbs or pacemakers are the simplest form of cyber. The guy who recently had his heart replaced with an electric pump is probably the most advanced example of cyber or cyborg technology today, and in the laboratory scientists have been experimenting with brain plugs on monkeys for years.

It has to be said that the phrase 'cyberpunk' has been hijacked in recent years, being used all too readily to describe today's technologies, and Peter Evans is right to say it has been somewhat diluted in meaning, as it is used to describe everything from home shopping through to virtual reality and the Net, or 'cyberspace' as they now call it. I guess you could say that these are the first examples of the near future arriving and man's first conscious effort to blur the boundaries between artificial intelligences and man; after all, virtual reality is an extension of body, vision and consciousness.

With all this in mind, Michael Minott's assertion that anime and manga such as BATTLE ANGEL ALITA and BUBBLE GUM CRISIS are not true cyberpunk is wrong. The amalgamation of man and machine is complete in both of these titles, and is quite obvious. The lines of metal and flesh are truly blurred. Alita is a cyborg, a human with a robot body. The Boomers in BGC also consist, like Arnie, of human flesh over an alloy endo-skeleton. Cyberpunk is rampant in anime and manga and examples include ROUJIN Z, AD POLICE, CYBER CITY OEDO 808, GHOST IN THE SHELL, THE DIRTY PAIR, SILENT MOBIUS - even RIDING

BEAN hints that all is not human under Bean Bandit's skin.

There are, however, a few pretenders to the title of cyberpunk, the most notable being AKIRA, which while set in the broken-down future, is no more than a high-tech, semi-religious, mystical fantasy. Of course the fact that AKIRA isn't cyberpunk in the true sense of the word doesn't matter. It is still a superb film and a film with an attitude. This is what truly matters, not whether something is cyberpunk or not but how it is executed; how it grips you as something special, giving that particular writer's or director's take on what is before us. After all, imagination is the real cyberspace, not some PC or VR helmet.

**IAN MCEWAN**, Arbroath, Angus, Scotland.

*HELEN : This is all very well if the only important part of 'cyberpunk' is the first five letters, as you say. I disagree; what about the second part of the word? CYBER may well imply simply the fusion of man and machine but add PUNK and you get another dimension. PUNK has a wide range of connotations and resonances from the late mediaeval and Tudor period to the America of the Thirties and the angry, alienated youth of Britain in the 70s; but two of them seem to me to merit particular consideration in relation to cyberpunk. The kids who stayed defiantly down and dirty on the streets didn't give a four-letter word for social order, justice, power, authority, elegance, intelligence, beauty or any other conventionally-defined desirable end. And Shakespeare's punks were the dregs of society, hangers-on scratching a living as best they could in the cracks between the glittering, barbaric social interfaces of Renaissance Europe. For both these groups, morality, respect, religion and the other gluestrands that held those with a stake in society into its structures were irrelevant. They had to achieve survival, and their own version of freedom, on whatever terms they could.*

*Those 'punk' attitudes are central to cyberpunk. If human + machine = cyber, human + machine + attitude/outlook = cyberpunk. You can't have the technological dimension without the attendant social and political influences too. THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN and THE BIONIC WOMAN have, in my opinion, nothing to do with cyberpunk at all. Both are just shows about good cops or special agents with 'superpowers' - not mystical, but created by Western technology. Both*

*are designed to say "Look how terrific our society and our science are! Only the established social order can properly control this and use it for everyone's good; only The Carefully Chosen Few are fit to use it." And who chooses? And how can you control access? And will it really change anything anyway? These are questions addressed by neither of those TV series, but they are central to the ethos of cyberpunk.*

*The way we're going at present in the developed world, far from being a 'fusion of body, vision and consciousness', VR may be just another expensive playpen in which the haves can hide from the reality of the havenots. Expanding your consciousness is only worthwhile if the process enables you to see further than the end of your own nose. But the cyberpunk debate looks as if it has the potential to run and run ...*

Dear Helen,

Greetings! I just picked up the new No. 1 of ANIME UK. I'm not a reader of your fine publication but I absolutely had to grab this ish - why? 'cause I've never found anyone else who loved LUPIN III enough to do a big feature on him! Helen, you're the coolest!! LUPIN III is my favourite anime series, and while most fans have at least seen CAGLIOSTRO CASTLE, no-one else seems to love the show as much as I do. I've got everything that's been released in the US so far as well as some Japanese stuff. As you may know, Streamline said they were gonna dub SECRET (aka MYSTERY) OF MAMO, but it hasn't happened, and for all I know it's not gonna. (Figures; that's the one I want the most!)

Your feature contained large gobs of useful info (which only furthers my obsession) but I found a couple of TV films missing from your chronology/timeline. One is LUPIN III : RUSSIA YORI AIWOKOMETE (aka FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE), a TV movie which aired 24th July 1992. The other I don't exactly know the name of, but the only translation I've heard is BURNING SWORD, and it's another TV movie which just aired 24th July 1994. There was also one extra episode of the third TV series (LUPIN III PART 3) that aired 6th November 1985. This info comes out of the little book that came with the Feb.95 issue of ANIMAGE which lists every anime movie, TV series and video ever, so I just found it out myself! At any rate, thanks so much for that great LUPIN tribute, and I'll definitely pick up the next ANIME UK for the second part! Sometimes I feel I've picked an 'insignificant' series to be my favorite (as long and sprawling as



the series is) especially since most of the stuff is from the 70s - but guess what? I really don't care, because every Zenigata/Lupin chase is hilarious, but Ranma getting splashed is funny only so many times. LUPIN III is No. 1! Cheers!

**T. J. RAPPEL**, Appleton, WI, USA.

*HELEN : Well, if intelligence, sophistication, wit, charm, a huge accumulation of talent and a wicked sense of humour are insignificant, then blessed are the insignificant! I have loved LUPIN III for years and I know*

*mation; and by the time you read this you will already be able to buy SECRET OF MAMO in the USA - again, see Newsline. May all your wishes come true so promptly!*

Dear ANIME UK,  
I'm trying to organise a British/European fan club for fans of the animated TV series BATTLE OF THE PLANETS and its Japanese original, GATCHAMAN. I'd be very grateful if you could help me by publishing this letter in your magazine. If enough people can be contacted I

whatever you happen to call them). Have you ever considered doing the same with your magazine? The first few issues have been sold out for a long time now, and I'm sure there are plenty of people still wishing to get hold of them. You could publish a few old issues in each 'graphic novel' and use lower quality paper to help keep the price low. If you do like the idea, I'd also like to add that you shouldn't try reducing the 2size (page area) like graphic novels. Put simply, it wouldn't work as the text will be too small to read comfortably.

Dear Helen,  
I think your mag's still got loads of useless info in it. It's only the new Jap stuff we want to know about. Japan Rock, Para (sic) Rangers, Guyver???  
Oh, another thing, you're starting to give people the wrong image of Anime, people who like GUYVER and stuff wrote to me (from a penpal listing)!!! You no what I mean (hopefully).  
Anyway at least your mag's better value now. And why do you keep introducing people to anime? Every single mag?  
Um, well, I think there's something constructive out of that. Yours,  
**HARLEY SAGAR** (Ryoma), Didcot, Oxon, UK.

*HELEN : If you only want to know about 'new Jap stuff' and don't mind missing out on all the wonderful old titles that are still virtually unknown in the West, that's your loss, but think about this : if SOMEBODY hadn't taken the trouble to 'introduce people to anime' how would you or I know anything about it? I intend to keep introducing people to anime for as long as humanly possible. If you don't like it, skip those sections or stick to magazines that concentrate solely on Japanese releases, like NEWTYPE. (Be warned, though, even the Big N runs features on older anime, especially in this, their tenth anniversary year.)*

Dear Helen,  
Get one superhero and add a control medal and some sonic blades, and what do you get? GUYVER THE DARK HERO; he has got to be the best superhero in town, or should I say alien? Anyone who doesn't like him is an outrageous twerp and a bubble-brain! I have 5 videos of THE GUYVER (cartoon version) and one film version, so that proves I'm a real fan of THE GUYVER. I mean look, it isn't every day you see a man in BIO BOOSTER ARMOUR! He just looks so cute oops, I mean ferocious ... as GUYVER would say, BIO BOOSTER ARMOUR GUYVER, HE'S OUT TO GET YOU.  
**LAURA TAYLOR**, Liverpool, UK.

*HELEN : Well, Laura, I have to admit I like my men without exoskeletons; but long may you go on enjoying your favourite anime! Don't neglect all those other cute-but-ferocious guys in anime, though, will you?*

Hi Helen,  
Re. Desmond Waters' request for POP'N'TWINBEE manga. I have read of one (in ANIMERICA, Vol 2 No. 8, FRESH FROM THE FOREST column) : TWINBEE RAINBOBEL ADVENTURE by Shinagawa Kid, published by Tokuma Shoten. It's also been made into a drama CD. All the best.  
**FRASER MORTON**, Newry, Co. Down, Northern Ireland.

*HELEN : Fraser, thank you very much!*



*quite a few other fans, here in Europe and in the USA, who feel the same way - that shamelessly talented artist V. M. Wyman always seems to have LUPIN items on her convention artshow display board, for instance, and there are lots of others out there who share your passion for Monkey Punch's creations. Why not put in a penpal ad to try and contact other LUPIN fans? I'm sure you'd have a lot to say to each other! We just received data on the 24th July telefeature from Jolyon Yates, so turn to the Newsline for more infor-*

hope to arrange informal meetings and perhaps publish a BOTP fanzine for far-flung BOTP fans. Anyone out there interested in participating in a BOTP club and/or fanzine can write to me, enclosing an ssae please, or phone me on Reading (01734) 868771.  
**Z. B. KATTSE**, 40 The Maying, Reading, Berks., RG2 8US, U.K.  
Hello,  
I have a suggestion. Sometime after its original release, manga tends to get republished in graphic novels (or

Keep up the good work!  
**STEVEN WONG**, Plymouth, Devon, UK

*HELEN : It's certainly something to think about. Would enough other readers like to see reprints to make it worth doing? (Costs on small print-runs are high so even on cheaper paper you need to charge a fairly high price.) Would a 'Best of AUK 1-6', say, work better than whole-issue reprints, where ads, con reports, etc, tend to be out of date and maybe tedious to read? Maybe other readers will let us know what they think.*



# FANZINE IN FOCUS

**STEVE KYTE**  
reviews  
**THE MANGA  
PLAY-  
GROUND**

'Charming' is the word that keeps slipping into my mind here. In a fanzine field cominated by Shirow and Sonoda wannabes and the same old 'high octane cybermayhem' (YAWN!), this is like a breath of fresh air. Writer/artist martyn Brown has produced an anthology zine that really does stand out from the crowd. The various strips share an interesting blend of influences from manga to traditional English children's storybooks.

Imagine, if you will, a scatty cocktail

This seems to be a common 'problem' with Western attempts at manga style.

Of course, defining what actually constitutes 'manga style' is tricky. There is no such single animal. It's certainly not just giving saucer-like eyes and wayward, improbable hairdos to Marvel/DC comic-style drawings - which is a trap many fall into. Judging by his editorial in issue 3, Martyn seems to have a better grasp of what it's about than most - letting the pictures tell the story. As he says, 'Leave words to novels'.

Most manga is designed to be scan-read. Dialogue and particularly explanatory text boxes take more of a back seat than they do in the West, while sound effects (even for non-existent 'sounds' like silence!)

are more prominent. Letting the pictures do most of the work makes it much more cinematic. Of course, there are exceptions (no-one would call a manga like Shirow's ORION unwordy!) but this seems to apply to most.

One major problem Western manga imitators encounter is space. Manga have an awful lot of pages! Writer/artists can afford to take pages to cover a simple sequence of events or have a single panel covering entire spread a rare luxury in Western comics, which are just too short. The problem isn't easily resolved in fanzines either.

Cost usually prevents them assuming Japanese phone-book proportions. Martyn Brown has recognised this problem and cut the number of strips in THE MANGA PLAYGROUND, but he still hasn't the space to explore this method of storytelling. Perhaps the answer lies in running a single story, or slowing the pace of the existing ones?

The standard of his artwork is constantly improving with practice. Even the different strips in issue #1 show a marked development between them, and this has continued with each issue. I'd like to see the 'manga style' extend into other bits than the faces, like backgrounds - not as interesting to draw as characters, but they can make or break the

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of PROJECT A-KO, DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO, the 'magical princess' shows like MINKY MOMO and a dash of Miyazaki, colliding headlong with 1920s/30s girls' boarding school tales, Lewis Carroll, the terrors of St. Trinians and the wierd 60s kiddie TV shows of Oliver Postgate like POGLES WOOD, NOGIN THE NOG and THE CLANGERS. Top it all off with a wiggly straw and a paper umbrella and you'll have some idea of the feel I get from THE MANGA PLAYGROUND. This 'cocktail' pretty much applies to the art as well as they scripts. To be honest, the manga influence, while quite noticeable, is mainly confined to the character faces (and then mainly the girls for some reason) and effects (speed lines, etc).

mood of a scene. Having said that, these too have greatly improved. The scripting drifts a bit here and there, but there's a nice gentle humour running through all the strips and very little violence - unless you include exploding toothpaste! Heck, who could resist a strip called DOOR-TO-DOOR DORA anyway. (Don't answer that!)

The price could be a problem, though. many would consider £3.00 a copy hefty, and be put off giving the zine a try. Steps should be taken to reduce the repro costs and get the cover price down.

If you like the softer, sillier side of anime/manga and appreciate a little originality, I'd say pay a visit to THE MANGA

PLAYGROUND. Careful though, you may not want to go home for tea!

THE MANGA PLAYGROUND, issues 1-3 available from MARTYN BROWN, 6 Elliott Street, The Hoe, Plymouth, Devon, PL1 2PP, U.K.

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## FAN SCENE

### FANSCENE ROUNDUP

is the place to go for info on anime and manga fanzines, conventions and all kinds of fan activity. Make sure your fellow-otaku know about YOUR

fanzine or get-together -

send details to FANSCENE ROUNDUP, ANIME UK, 70 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7DF, UK. Please note : convention info has to reach us AT LEAST three months before the convention date.

**PHILIPPE LHOSTE** is starting up an anime and manga APA. An APA is an association of people who share an interest and contribute equally, by writing and by defraying part of the costs, to a regular publication devoted to that interest and authored by all members. The main language of this APA will be French. If you are interested write to Philippe at 3 rue Bourdaloue, 75009 Paris, France.

**DO YOU REMEMBER BATTLE OF THE PLANETS?** If so, you'll be interested in a new club devoted to GATCHAMAN and its edits. Turn to ANIMAIL for more details!

**ANIMEGA BBS** : A new anime/manga Bulletin board is operating in the UK, providing news and reviews of new releases and lots more; MercuryNet links with American and Japanese Echos allow access to a wide range of other message areas. AnimeGA uses modem speeds 1200 bps to 14.4k V32bis. All you need is a computer and a modem, and it's free to join! For more information call up the BBS on 01462 481745.

### WINNERS! WINNERS! WINNERS!

The winners of the three competitions in issue 1 are listed below. Special mention must go to the most enthusiastic entrant, Sancar Kavvas of Auckland, N.Z., who sent NINETEEN correct entries for the TENCHI MUYO! cell competition. Thanks for the lovely picture postcards, Sancar - they made us want to hop on a plane and try some of those great N.Z. beaches for ourselves! And Karl Kochvar of Chicago sent some great artwork on his very amusing card. The correct answer to the question 'What is Tenchi's surname?' is, of course, MASAKI - not MUYO, as some of you thought. TENCHI MUYO is usually translated as GOOD FOR NOTHING TENCHI or NO TIME FOR TENCHI.

**TENCHI MUYO! CONTEST:** Top prize of a TENCHI cel goes to MARTIN WONG of Goole, N. Humberside, UK. Runner-up prizes : R.D. Newman of Hinckley, Leics, UK; Neil Hutchison

of Coniston, Cumbria, UK; Yuk Fung Ho, Manchester, UK; Michael Wong, Darlington, Co. Durham, UK; and Sancar Kavvas, Auckland, New Zealand.

## CONTEST CORNER

**FRENCH FANZINES** - following in the steps of 1994 European language Fanzine of the Year ANIMELAND and its compatriot TSUNAMI, AMAZING WORLD is the fanzine of WORLD DESIGN, a club dedicated to the promotion of Japanese animation. It costs 28FFr. per issue for 46 glossy paper pages, 8 (inc covers) in colour, with news, features, small ads and more. Issue 4 includes videogame reports, Takahashi and Nagai profiles, TAIHO SCHICHAUZO!, USHIO & TORA and THE LION KING. Write for info to Assoc. WORLD Design, 10/72 rue du Bearn, 59370 MONSEN-BAROEUL, France (enclose saae, or 2 IRCs if writing from outside France).

### ANIME GOODS FROM JAPAN - ADDRESS CORRECTION

Yoshihiro Taira's anime shop in Tokyo is called ANIME WORLD STAR (our mention in issue 1 missed the 'STAR' off - sorry!) The address is Sanken Palace, Higashi-Fushimi 1st Floor, 5-6-12 Fuji-cho, Houya, Tokyo 202, JAPAN. Please write in ENGLISH or JAPANESE ONLY and find out how Yoshihiro-san can help you find those elusive anime goodies!

### ANIME GOODS IN PARIS

If you're visiting PARIS you might like to drop into one of these anime/manga stores. Most open Monday-Saturday from about 10 or 11 am, but call to check if you're making a special trip. LIBRAIRIE JUNKU, 18 rue des Pyramides, 75001 Paris, tel 42 60 89 12 KATSUMI, 22 rue Titon, 75011 Paris, tel 40 09 18 66 ANIME SHOP GAUIN, 22 rue Keller, 75011 Paris, tel 47 00 28 54

**GREEN LEGEND RAN CONTEST** : Five sets of t-shirt, sweatshirt and tape go to : Keith Elcombe, Andover, Hants, U.K.; Tim Parnell, Ipswich, Suffolk, U.K.; Wai Wong, Helensburgh, Dumbartonshire, Scotland; Thomas Lawes, Barford, Warks., U.K.; Kevin Mineur, Wimborne, Dorset, U.K.

Many thanks to Lesley Ehm and those nice people at PIONEER LDCE for providing the prizes for these two contests!

**LONDON ANIME CLUB CONTEST** : Exclusive T-shirts go to : Paul Hallam, Sheffield, Yorkshire, U.K.; Iain Bell, Bradford, W. Yorks., U.K.; Matthew Hogg, Heywood, Lancs., U.K.; Christian Herbaut, London N22, U.K.; Sean Grogan, London E4, U.K.

Big thanks to Dragon and the L.A.C. for providing the Rumi Vyse T-shirts.

### THIS ISSUE'S COMPETITIONS

Once again, PIONEER LDCE give the fans what they want -

#### WIN AN ORIGINAL KISHIN HEIDAN CEL!!!

No prints, no reprints, this is the real thing. And it can be YOURS if you answer just one simple question on a postcard before 15th August 1995. Can you tell us the decade in which the action in KISHIN HEIDAN starts? Send your answer to the AUK address (see front page) and don't forget YOUR name and address too. First out of the bag on 15th August gets the cel, the next 4 get KISHIN HEIDAN tapes.



**SYLVIE BOISSON**, 1 Rue Daguerre, 93110 Rosny-sous-bois, France : "I'm 22 years old and I like drawing. My fave anime are KAZE NO TAIRIKU, WINDARIA, MACROSS, ORANGE ROAD, TOTORO, etc etc ... I'm waiting eagerly for your letters!"

**ELENA FESSIA**, Via Carmagnola 12, 10040

Pracorno, Italy, aged 15 : and

**LAURA PIPINO**, Piazza Sauro 1, 10150 Torino, Italy, aged 18 : "We are two Italian girls who would like to correspond with any boys that like Japanese animated cartoons and manga. We love SAINT SEIYA, LODOSS WAR, MAISON IKKOKU and many others. OM SHURA SVAHA!"

**JAMES TERRIS**, 404 Woodfield Dr., Nepean, Ontario, Canada K2G 3W9; age 20. "I want to correspond with other anime/manga fans. Faves include Takahashi, Otomo, Shirow, as well as BATTLE ANGEL, NAUSICAA and 3 x 3 EYES."

**MAI NGOC TRANG**, 1 Tantallon Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1NY, Scotland : "Calling all budding artists who have spare time to draw anime pictures. I am trying to collect fan art and would love to receive copies of artwork by anime fans."

**RICKY MINNS**, Top Col, Hackford Road, Wickelwood, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 9HT, UK; age 20 : Hobbies painting, viewing & collecting anime & manga, also sport and music. Fave manga DOMINION, BGC, fave anime GUYVER, GUY, LEGEND OF THE 4 KINGS and MOLIVER. "I can't find any manga/anime fan anywhere, especially female! Contact from all over the world esp. Japan, USA, UK."

**DANIEL TAYLOR**, 49 Enderby Road, Blaby, Leicester, LE8 4GD, England : aged 14; would like to be penpals with anime/manga fans in Japan and the USA. Likes "all sorts of manga and anime, esp. RANMA 1/2, AKIRA, DRAGONBALL Z, THE GUYVER. I promise to reply to all letters in the same week as they are received!"

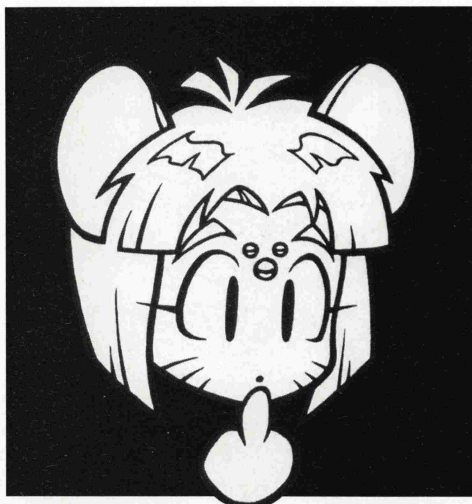
**THOMAS COLLIER**, 5 Seymour Place, Oundle, Northants., PE8 4QB, UK : "I'm 17 years old, love anime, manga and Japan and want to correspond with likeminded people, especially female fans (I've only ever come across one!) and anyone from Japan - but anyone is welcome! Fave anime GUNBUSTER, 3 x 3 EYES, anything Takahashi; other interests drawing/ painting, videogames, skateboarding."

**JOHN SYPAL**, 5731 N.W. 10th, Lincoln, NE 68521, USA : "I'm a fan of the lighter side of anime. I love OH MY GODDESS! and am dying to see YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!. I'd like a penpal (especially from Japan) to correspond/possibly trade with. I'll answer everyone and can't wait for your letters! Get writing now (please)!"

**ROB STURTEVANT**, 4075 Weymouth Lane, Sacramento, CA 95823, USA; e-mail rps@dt.wongy.wmeonline.sacbx.com : "I'm 19 years old, fave anime KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD, URUSEI YAT-SURA, BUBBLEGUM CRISIS, PROJECT A-KO, etc. I find I like things of a lighter nature, with at least some comic relief... I'm only able to correspond in English, but would like penpals from all over."

## PEN PALS





Another quiz to tax your brain and test your anime knowledge. **NEO-OTAKU** questions are based on material available in the UK, so they shouldn't give you too much trouble, but the higher levels may present more of a challenge.

#### NEO-OTAKU

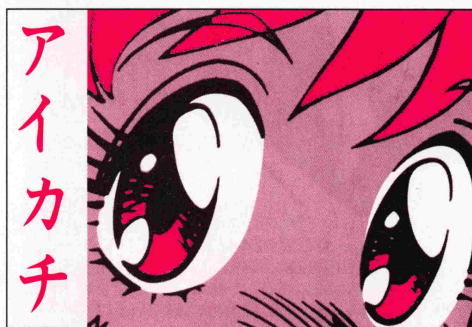
1. Where was Guld Goa Bowmann born?
2. Name Leona Ozaki's tank in DOMINION TANK POLICE.
3. Name Sylia Stingray's lingerie shop.
4. Who designed the characters in SALAMANDER?

#### OTAKU

1. What is the full Japanese title of the series shown on British and American TV as BATTLE OF THE PLANETS?
2. Which famous anime couple worked together on MOBILE POLICE PATLABOR?
3. Which race does the mother of the hero of DAGGER OF KAMUI belong to?
4. Who won the Best Fanzine title in the 1994 Osamu Tezuka Awards?

**FAN ART SPACE** : send us your black and white pictures (plus ssae for return) and we'll print those we like best!

Below: **SHAHEEN MEARAJ ABDUL-AZIZ**  
Right top: **MAURICE HARDING**  
Right bottom: **CLARE PRICE**



**eyecatch**



ネクスト イssue (NEXT ISSUE)

**アニメ**  
**AnimeUK**

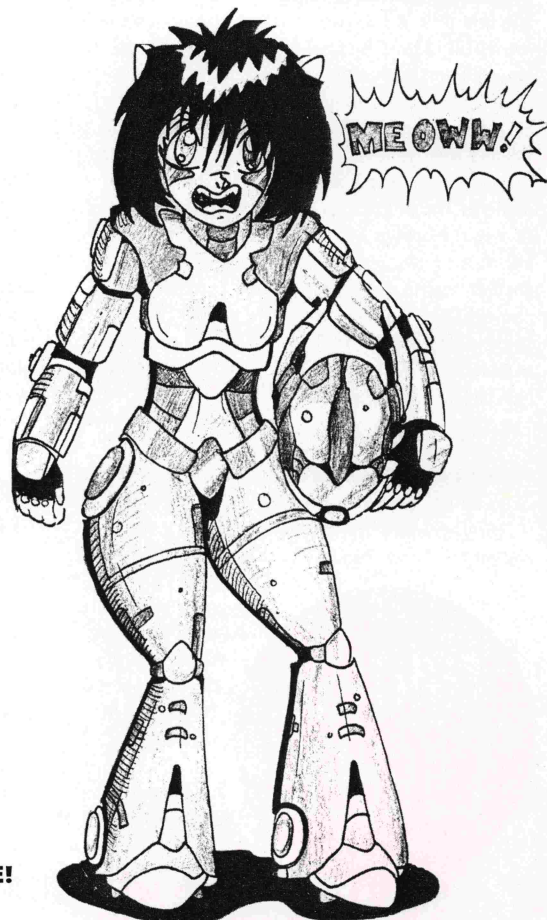
AUK NEW SERIES #5 ON SALE NEXT MONTH • SEE YOU THERE!

#### SUPER-OTAKU

1. What year was DAICON III held?
2. Who directed OMOIDE POROPORO?
3. On which Japanese novel is NIGHT ON THE GALACTIC RAILROAD based, and who wrote it?
4. Which manga artist was first to produce a comic-book for release directly into the American market, and what year did it appear in the USA?

#### Answers in the next issue!

Did you have problems last month? Here are the answers: **NEO-OTAKU** 1. Hecatonchires; 2. Shoji Kawamori and Shinichiro Watanabe; 3. Rumiko Takahashi; 4. Roy Fokker. **OTAKU** 1. NewType; 2. The stone in Nadia's pendant; 3. He was Carl Macek's partner in founding Streamline Pictures; 4. Kunio Okawara. **SUPER-OTAKU** 1. Osamu Tezuka; 2. They are a US fan-dubbing house who produce anime spoofs, eg DIRTY PAIR DO DISHES; 3. One of the Japanophile Hearn's stories, A GHOST STORY, features in USMC's ANIMATED CLASSIC OF JAPANESE LITERATURE series - although they use his pseudonym KOIZUMI YAKUMO on the credits; 4. Frederik L. Schodt & Jared Cook.







## ANIME GALLERY

Another beautiful picture from KISHIN TROOPS - the elegant KISHIN WIND in action. A towering 16m high, the Kishin Corps kite is an impressive sight whether on the ground or in the air. Its relatively light weight - a mere 19 tons, compared with the 45-ton mass of the heavy artillery mecha Kishin Thunder - it can easily reach a land-speed of 48km an hour.

KISHIN TROOPS © Pioneer

